The Influence of the Female on the Architecture of the Traditional Chinese House

- The example of Taiwan in the nineteenth century

Hwang Bor-ling

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University of Edinburgh

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed entirely by myself
and is wholly my own original work

Hwang Bor-ling

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Abstract

The conventional view of the development of the traditional Chinese house is that the architecture, as expressed through the planning, the construction and the utilisation of space is dominated by the male. Deference to the role of the father figure and the concept of lineage which he represented has been seen to be at the expense of both the physiological and psychological needs of female members of the household.

Whilst accepting that, at a superficial level, provision for female needs within the home was inadequate when compared to the male, this study challenges the view that Chinese domestic architecture was uninfluenced by either the practical or cultural roles of women within the home where they spent almost the whole of their time and were almost solely responsible for the control of domestic affairs.

The study is set in the context of Taiwan in the 19th century at a time when the traditional values of mainland China were being strongly re-asserted by the island's immigrant community. During this period the house was re-established as the primary focus of social order and values, and discrimination - as we would view it today - against women was at its most extreme.

The study examines Taiwanese domestic architecture of the period from a female perspective and argues that male attitudes and reactions towards the female - especially in relation to chastity - which manifested itself in the spatial organisation of the house were so strong that the influence of the female was evident "in the negative", but was still real and potent.

The study concludes that whilst the domestic influences of women biologically might have been constrained by the practices and tradition of the time, their cultural role - especially as defined as a counterpoint to that of the male - had a direct and decisive influence on the spatial architecture of the traditional Chinese house.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1-1 The life of women in traditional Chinese society

Unlike the male babies who slept in beds, played with jade and wore clothing,

> ...we let female babies lie on the ground and play with tiles and roof bricks, and hold them up to worship their ancestors at birth. We have them sleep on the floor so they shall know their humble status and position subordinate to their masters. We have them play with roof tiles and bricks to accustom them to work; and we have them worship their ancestors to let them know their duty of serving their forebears. These are the three basic obligations for women, part of the orthodoxy of rites...to admonish them from birth so they shall learn not to attempt to exceed what they deserve...
>
> - Female Admonishment 女誡 by Pan-chao 班固, the late Han dynasty

This text is brief, yet it gives a summary of the customary fate of women in traditional Chinese society.

The attitudes towards women under traditional Chinese culture are profiled by the following simplified description about the lives of Chinese women in the Han society:

They were normally thought of as being worthless in an agricultural society which needed numerous labourers in the fields. "Emphasising boys and despising girls" thus became a basic tenet of Chinese attitude to gender difference. Additionally, as a daughter would marry and become a member of her husband's family someday, all her daily expenses before the marriage and the necessary expensive trousseau for her wedding were regarded as waste, or as property stolen from her parents. The Chinese would refer to daughters as "merchants that lose money" 賠錢貨. Such ideas informed the wide-spread custom of "drowning a daughter at birth" [1] and the matrimonial form of "child daughter-in-law". Such customs were not caused

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[1] To kill a new-born baby could be occasioned by any of three considerations: (i) the time of birth was believed to be ominous and to bring bad luck to the family, (ii) the domestic financial situation was such that another child could not be afforded, (iii) the idea of "emphasising boys

entirely by the woman's physical differences or by purely economical conditions, because women of "good" families were not allowed to work outside the family [2] no matter how poor it was, whilst both "drowning a daughter at birth" and giving away daughters as a "child daughter-in-law" were also practised by the rich and by scholars.

Girls were completely separated from boys from the age of seven [3] (The Interior Rule 禮記 內則- the Chou dynasty), and taught only how to be wives and mothers. All their learning was focused on the rites and skills of domestic affairs, and the only knowledge allowed to them was concerned with women's virtue 婦德, proper appearance 婦容, deportment 婦功, and speech 婦言. Therefore, though they were taught to read, most women's literacy was limited to the words need for the promotion of domestic ethical education, and the control of day-to-day domestic finances (The Female Norm 女範, the early Ch'ing dynasty).

As a woman could only be treated as a complete being (but not an independent individual) and become an ancestor of her husband's descendants when she was married, the woman's marriage was referred to as *Yu-kui* 于歸 (going home). However, the Chinese believed that a good marriage should bring together the social resources of two families; it was thus the business of the heads of the two concerned families, and nothing to do with the

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and despising girls". The custom was also common in eighteenth century immigrant Taiwan (h.59-2 1987: 135).

[2] As Chinese philosophy was "situation-centred" (Hsu 許琅光 1963), the ideas about *chia* 家, *chia-tsu* 家族, *tsung-tsu* 宗族, and *tsung-chi'n* 宗親 were flexible, indistinct, and difficult to translate literally into English, even though so much ink has been spilt on the subject by both Chinese and Western scholars. The "operational" definitions, however, needed for discussion are as follows:

* Household (*chia*) - The basic unit of physical and economic life composed of a dominant father and all his family relatives; it sometimes could be known as *fang* in an extended family.
Family (*chia-tsu*) - The primary co-residential social unit for members of the same agnatic descent group; rights and obligations concerning family property and ancestral worship were compulsive, exclusive, and were equally shared by all those domestic groups, under the father's absolute domination in the name of recent ancestors.
* Lineage (*tsung-tsu*) - A corporate group which celebrated ritual unity and was based on demonstrated descent from common ancestors. As its cultural meaning was emphasised over the physical aspects of life, the lineage structure included no woman, and normally had common property and an ancestral shrine as the symbolic navel of its members.
* Clan (*tsung-chi'n*) - A community with a common surname based on the stipulation of descent from a common ancestor, it could, therefore, be adaptively organised by groups of cousins, or otherwise related villagers, and even people from the same homeland, according to social needs.(ref. h.7, h.8, h.38, h.46, h.64)

[3] Ages in this study are indicated in the Chinese way, one year older than the Western calculation.

marrying couple. The traditional Chinese marriage, therefore, was concerned little with love, and woman were requested only to do the duties of reproduction and of serving ancestors. The enjoyment of love and sex could only happen for women of inferior class who were beyond the ethical bounds of society, or be experienced through the plots of "immoral" literature and poems.

When a woman became a daughter-in-law in her husband's family, her status and position was low. She not only had to bear great animosity and oppression from her mother-in-law, but also had to resist hostile attacks from her sisters-in-law whilst trying to defend her own rights. However a wife - though not a concubine - could be upgraded as her husband's role in the household changed and she could attain the position of female household-head (家長). Even though the authority of a female household-head was still limited and only partially recognised by law and by lineage system, she could in practice be a powerful domestic influence.

When a young woman was unfortunate enough to be widowed, she would not only be restrained by the lineage and by society, to remain widowhood for the rest of her life, she also had to take over all responsibility for maintaining her husband's line, something she had never been trained to do. Difficult as all this could be, a woman would still have to be very careful to keep her virtue, not only for the sake of her own honour, but also for the social standing of her husband's descent group. This was expected both under the code of social morality and by the values held by women themselves. The only honours that a woman could aim for were the titles that came with being someone's wife, or someone's mother, but never through her own name or her own merit. Such sexual discrimination continued after her death. Even the doorway and the place for her coffin were limited.

In general, the status of women was low and harsh after the Sung dynasty, and the situation was no different for the immigrants of Taiwan, who shared several notable features with most women in this immigrant community:

1. It was a commonly accepted situation for women to be sexually discriminated against from birth to death.

2. Women were caged for their whole lives first in their parents' house and then in their husbands' house, and there was no other position for them in a male-centred society. The greatest achievement that a woman could have was to become an honourable ancestor after her death in her husband's lineage.

3. Law, society, and the lineage acknowledged only "good" women, who were confined by the lineage system and were required to respect totally the ethics. Women were apparently seen solely in material terms as fulfilling the requirements for property, reproduction and labour for the men's lineage. Only "bad" women, from inferior classes could go beyond these bounds and could satisfy the men's sensuality and need for love and sex outside the lineage.

4. As the domestic relationships of traditional Chinese descent formed a kind of "competitive reward structure" (cf. section 6-3), both the powerful and oppressed positions of women co-existed in the descent group at the same time. Women in the family were unavoidably competitive and in conflict, not co-operative or allowed to live in harmony.

5. As the fate of a woman depended entirely on the man to whom she was attached, women could only live in a passive and self-restrained manner for their men. They became loyal advocates and the true reflection of male values in domestic life.

1-2 Issues

A study of the documents (e.g. legal precedents and family precepts), relating to old folk custom (e.g. wedding rule and filial duty), and classic materials (e.g. novels and travelogues), shows that there are several cultural phenomena concerned the issue which may be summed up by the following factors:

1. The prosperity and the continuation of the patrifocal lineage was fundamental to traditional Chinese values. As women's capacity for reproduction (to create descendants) and the duty of worship (to serve ancestors) were seen as exerting a direct influence on the endurance of the lineage, the loyalty of a woman became of vital concern to the Chinese patriarchy. The attitude towards gender, directly regarding men's filiation and women's humble service, was thus the true concern behind this masculine value, but was not expressed overtly.

2. Under the pressure of law and social mores, females had no option but to show loyalty to the patriarch in order to confirm and strengthen their domestic positions within the patrifocal family. Because the system of polygamy and the *fang* made women the victims of "relative

deprivation" (a.33 1986: 697), women became not only the loyal advocates of the value of fatherhood, but also oppressor of the other women in the domestic sphere.

3. As, in accordance with their cultural role, men did not spend much time at home without good reason, women became the true full-time users of the house, as well as powerful domestic managers of daily life. Their absolute authority was however not acknowledged by law, society or the formal statements of lineages.

4. The role of women in the family could evolve from that of a humble daughter-in-law to that of a powerful female household-head, or a deputy. Further-more, the number of female family members should in theory be no less than male family members in the descent group because of polygamy. Women took the real leading role in almost all domestic conflicts and tensions in most traditional Chinese families.

5. All female family with different backgrounds were ensnared in a confined domestic space, and were strictly separated from men by the bounds of gender. This meant that the traditional Chinese residence could not help but accommodate the unacknowledged but clearly active competition among women, hidden behind the traditional values of male descent. It was an unavoidable side effect, which simply had to be tolerated.

6. The house, which was living space for all different distinguishable categories of the family, had to correspond fully and physically to the idea of gender, and to the hierarchical structure of the family's cultural role. Without this, all such distinctions would be meaningless. Such connections were strongly supported by the custom whereby the Chinese used to call people by the names of architectural spaces and their components. For instance, the Chinese called the head of the family "hall-master" (*t'ang-chu* 堂主), his wife "central-room" (*cheng-shr* 正室) and the concubine "side-room" (*p'ien-fang* 偏房), "cheap-interior" (*chien-nei* 賤內) referred to the wife and "outer-man" (*wai-tzu* 外子) to the husband, "hall-brother" (*t'ang-hsiung* 堂兄) to the patrilineal cousin, and "superficial-brother" (*piao-hsiung* 表兄) to the matrilineal cousin; "big-column" (*ta-chu-tzu* 大柱子) referred to the eldest son, and "second-beam" (*e-nen-tzu* 二楞子) to the second son; the daughter-in-law's natal family was called "outer-home" (*wai-chia* 外家).

As the design and construction of houses were under the control of men, we might therefore assume that the house was dominated by male values; and this view is perpetuated in much male dominated writing about the traditional Chinese house. However, despite men's status in the descent group was automatically bestowed by the lineage since their birth, and their position in a family was high and constant; men, in contrast with women, stayed at home less and dealt with few domestic affairs. The house, thus, was more as an index of their social status, wealth and achievement than a container of daily lives as it was to women. Therefore there is considerable interest in challenging the customary viewpoint and examining the house from the perspective of women. Salient questions include:

(i) How and how much did the traditional Chinese residence reflect the idea of gender influenced by male values, assuming gender was an important part of the male value system?

(ii) The traditional Chinese house was partially-self-sufficient. It was, to women at least, not only a place for physiological satisfaction, but also housed functions of religion, education and social intercourse. How did those work from the viewpoint of women, how was the symbolic meaning behind the actual building understood by women, and how did it affect their lives?

Finally, (iii) Is it possible that the role of women, as the true domestic authority and full-time user of the house, had real influence on decisions relating to the spatial organisation and the use of the traditional Chinese house?

1-3 The focus

This present study concentrates on the social phenomena and the traditional houses of Fujian immigrants in Taiwan between 1800s to 1895. This location and time is chosen for the following reasons:

1. Owing to its sectioned and inward development, Taiwan society can be treated as a semi-isolated sociological example of the Han culture. It had been known to the Chinese for centuries, but there was no movement of Han people until the 17th century, and Taiwan only developed into a society of "rough" civilisation of immigration over the next 150 years. The Han culture gradually grew up on this island undisturbed in later years,

largely ignored by both the mainland and other invasive cultures. It just sprouted and flourished, nourished by the core values of Chinese tradition. Taiwan became very rich, whilst its culture became sophisticated and mature in the 19th century. Taiwan developed successfully to become the last independent society of the Han people. Taiwanese immigrants were believed to be even more traditional than most Chinese on the mainland in the same period, when China started making increased contact with Western civilisation and changing its traditional values.

2. During the 19th century, more than 80 percent of the population (excluding aborigines) in Taiwan was of Fujian origin (b.17 1979: 23). Both Taiwan's local folk customs and its architectural character became very strongly influenced by this external culture.

3. Supported by a successful economy and by the availability of more skilled professionals in Taiwan in the 19th century, architecture in Taiwan developed from the simpler, rougher, and more honest model of the homeland, to become a characteristic Taiwanese architecture that combined both the local conditions and traditional values; under the restraints of tradition and social norms, the houses of the rich and the poor had many characteristics in common except in terms of detail and scale.

4. The position of women in Taiwan changed dramatically over the years of immigration. They were regarded as being extremely precious and were warmly welcomed in the early stages of immigration, because of their very small number, but gradually they lost their superior position in the population structure in the 19th century. Due to the influence of folk customs, and the lack of market demand, women in Taiwan were completely trapped by the rigid, strict and inhumane attitude towards gender. The position of women in Taiwan was frequently even worse than in most of the mainland during the same period. An example of this is that they were even sold to the mainland as prostitutes from the late 18th century onwards.

A further reason for studying the example of Taiwan is the availability of source material which provides convenient cases studies and evidence in support of the argument.

1-4 A review of published issues concerning gender and architecture

The movement of the local culture of Taiwan started to attract much attention only in the last decade, and the feminist movement began to be more active only in the last few years, though both of these came to the fore in the era of the Japanese occupation. And though much research has been published in each of these separate fields of study, there has been almost nothing which discusses the interrelations between women in the traditional Chinese society and the traditional Chinese architecture, especially as almost all studies of Western Sinologists focus their interest on socio-anthropological issues alone.

Traditional Chinese architecture in particular has frequently been discussed, and praised, for its brilliant achievements of technique, and its attractive architectural philosophy, but only from the customary viewpoint of male values because the understanding of them is still expressed mostly through male dominated writing. According to the superficial impressions about the architecture of the traditional Chinese houses which concerned men only, it seems that it would be natural and reasonable to infer that the female role was very minor or even non-existent, as most of researchers argued from an androcentric standpoint.

Issues concerning Han women in immigrant Taiwan have been much less discussed in past decades, and the relevant articles of feminism and sociology, such as, Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan by Margery Wolf (ref. a.56 1987), The lives of Taiwanese Women in The Ch'ing Dynasty by Cho Yi-wen (ref. a.11 1993) etc., have almost without exception from focusing on discussed the social problems that women met, and their mental and physical condition influenced by male oppression. There is almost no discussion about the environmental impact of the house where women stayed during that specific time. Until the present study little attention has been paid to the link between these two fields.

There are several references referred to this study that consider both fields. These include:

(1) The Research of Architecture in The Dream of the Red Chamber by Dr. Kuan Hwa-shan (Head of the Postgraduate School of Architecture, Tung-hai University, Taiwan) in 1984 (ref. b.20) a book concerning female roles and traditional architecture, though the study concentrates a good deal more on building up a spatial model of the mansion and garden that are described in the plot of The Dream of the Red Chamber. Female issues comprised only a small part, and are mentioned less systematically in several different sections. However, it still constitutes a valuable source of reference to architectural research which focuses on the relationship between women and the spaces of the traditional house.

(2) The classic novels of The Dream of the Red Chamber (by Ts'ao Hsueh-chin, the Ch'ing dynasty) and The Golden Lotus (the Ming dynasty, the author is still unconfirmed), two of the most famous novels in the late Chinese history are believed to be accurate in portraying real lives of the time. They provide much detailed information about the connection between the spatial relationship of the traditional house and the complicated domestic structure of the female role. However, as they are only the setting for the main plot and are written in a literary and dramatic way, at times difficult to relate to the rules of traditional architecture.

(3) Memoirs of a Court Lady by Ching-yi and Shen Yi-lin in 1992 (ref. a.20), A Daughter of Han by Ida Pruitt in 1993 (ref. a.21), and The Lin Family at Wu-feng by Johanna Menzel Meskill in 1979 (ref. d.22) are three biographical books written by modern writers. Though architecture is referred to only as background information, they still provide very useful historical information about females in the patrifocal lineage in the 19th century.

(4) The Living House - An Anthropology of Architecture in South-East Asia by Roxana Waterson in 1993 (ref. d.37) claims to be the first of its kind to present the house within the social and symbolic worlds from the perspective of both architect and anthropologist. Though there is no case study of Han people in 19th century Taiwan (only one of Taiwan's aboriginal tribes in Lanyu [Orchid Island] is mentioned), this book still provides a very helpful approach to this study.

1-5 Contents of the thesis

This thesis is based on a hypothesis that "if the architecture was completely dominated by the male in the traditional Chinese society, and ideas about gender were indeed an important part of male values; women were theoretically no less than men in a family, and stayed at home much longer than men in reality. The male attitudes towards gender must somehow be presented on the architecture.". In other words, the idea of "what a woman should be" must have been considered and expressed in male-governing architecture of house. The research, therefore, links the traditional Chinese ideas about gender and architecture, that have been viewed as two independent issues in Chinese society, and attempts to prove that the abstract bound (attitude to gender) and the concrete cage (the house) influenced each other, and had great effect on Chinese women's values and lives. The study, contrasts the customary masculine viewpoint of the traditional Chinese house, with the perspective of female users of the house, to attempt new explanations for spatial meaning and the ways of use of the house. This study also investigates the notion that gender influenced the architectural concept of the traditional Chinese house.

The thesis starts with an account of the most common vicissitudes encountered by traditional Chinese women during their lives, and shows the gender issues of importance in traditional Chinese society (section 1-1), against the background of immigration into Taiwan (Chapter 2). It explains why Taiwan in the period of 1800 to 1895 has been chosen as a suitable example for the arguments put forward. The discussion in Chapter Two centres mainly on the issues of Taiwan's economic development, its population structure, and signs of sexism in society of immigrant Taiwan. It also explains why Taiwan was a mature part of Chinese society, and why the identity of the immigrants was Chinese, not Taiwanese, and why this tradition continued to persist after the early nineteenth century. This part gives a basis for the discussion of the example of Taiwan and its culture in the light of traditional Chinese values in later chapters.

Chapter Three contains an exploration of the cultural role of women, which had been established since ancient times; the double standards of

Chinese attitudes about sex and gender, and why the female who originally being an occasional resource of "uncleanness" was changed to become the figure of "uncleanness" itself. This chapter also argues that the Chinese notion of "praising antiquity and despising contemporary" allowed the traditional idea of gender to remain essentially unchanged in form and use. It provides an important link with later discussion of the limits set for women and the taboos of spatial use in a traditional residence.

Chapter Four discusses the roles of family members within traditional male-dominated descent structure, and the interaction between two sexes in its domestic structure, in the following sequence - (i) fatherhood and its ownership (the start of a lineage), (ii) *fang*-separation (the growth of a lineage), (iii) the objection to outsiders (the identification of a family), (iv) gender separation (the anxiety about women's chastity), and (v) the possible roles of women, their limits, and their hidden influence, in a family. The argument thus provides the material for a spatial analysis of different roles of the family in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five puts forward an argument that the overt principles of traditional Chinese dwellings were not just male-centred, but completely father-centred. The discussion starts with the proto-model of the Chinese courtyard house, and shows the close relationship of building to the head of the male group. Then the general picture of architecture in the immigrant society of Taiwan; the ideas of dwelling space, as indicating the notion of immortality, the adoption of the *feng-shui* principle, and the idea that space is shared with spirits. All of these, fundamental to traditional values, are discussed to illustrate why architectural behaviour was a concern only for the male household-head, and not for other men in the family. This will strongly support the idea of spatial relationship, ownership, and the limits of its use discussed in Chapter Seven.

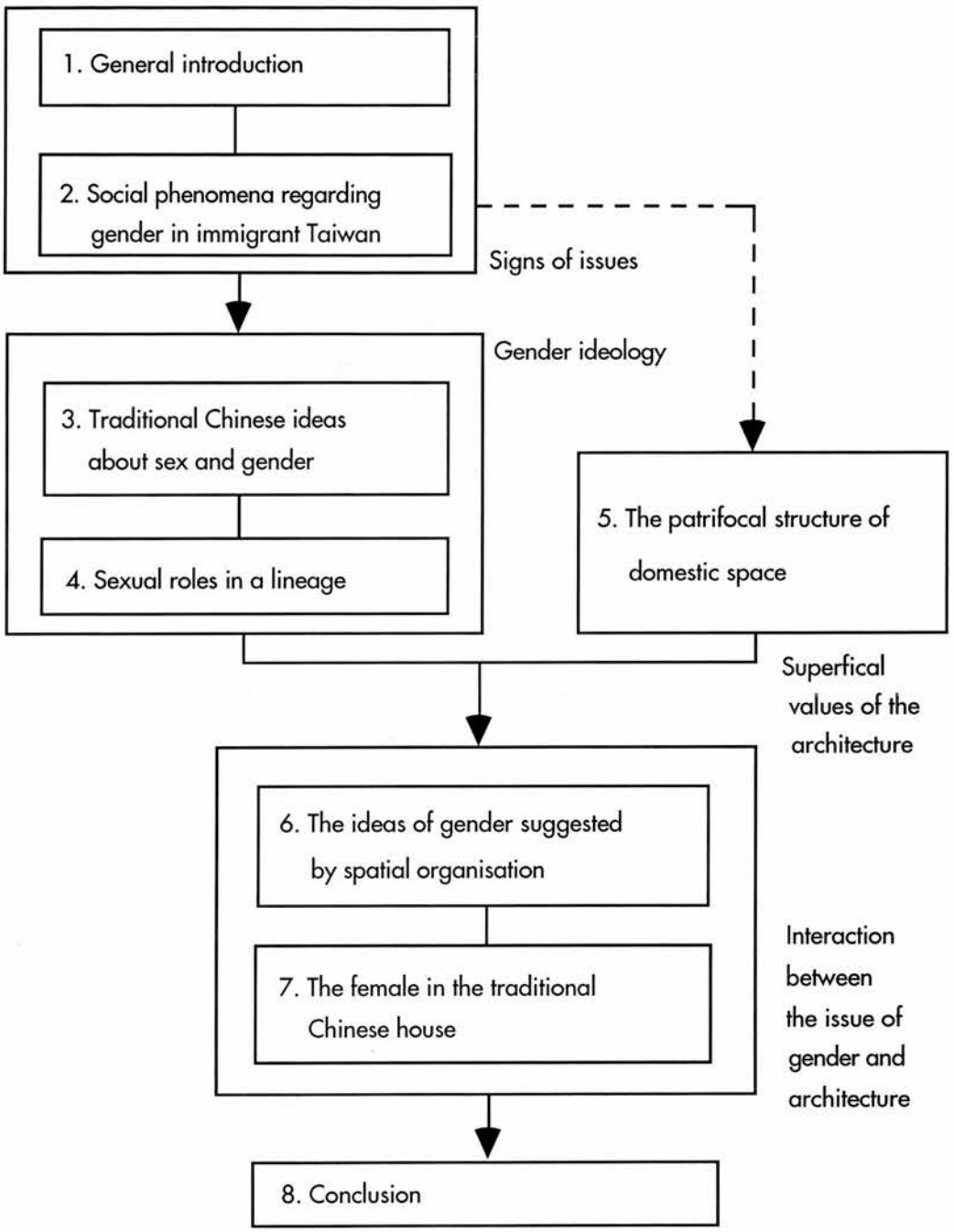
Chapters Six and Seven combine the general understanding of the cultural role of women (Chapter 3), the identity of women as a social being in a family (Chapter 4), and the spatial organisation of the traditional Chinese dwelling house in Taiwan (Chapter 5), as one complex issue, for further discussion on the relation of the female role and the concept of Chinese architecture. Chapter Six exposes the message of gender in the

strict and rigid spatial principles of the traditional dwelling house, and shows the potential domestic tensions among women which could be aroused by this masculine spatial arrangement and design.

Chapter Seven presents the actual spatial use and the limits imposed on women, inside the separated interior spaces of the traditional house, in accordance with the functions that a traditional Chinese extended family was expected to have. This part also assesses how women in traditional Chinese society perceived and explained the meanings of these spaces from the viewpoint of their dependent and repressed role.

The final chapter starts by re-emphasising how the cultural phenomena of Taiwan can be perfectly explained by the traditional values of the Chinese, and how the cultural identity of immigrant Taiwan had a consistent commonality. It ends with the argument that "the domestic influence of the female biologically might have been constrained by the practices and tradition of the time, their cultural role - especially as defined as a counterpoint to that of the male - positively had a direct and decisive influence on the spatial architecture of the traditional Chinese house."

The following chart outlines the framework of this study:



FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS

Chapter 2

Taiwan - the background before 1895

2-1 Geography

Taiwan, previously known as Formosa, is located to the south-east of mainland China, and separated from it by the Taiwan Strait. It is mainland China's biggest island, stretching about 390 km in length from north to south, is about 140 km wide at the centre, and has an area of over 36,103 square kilometres. Almost two thirds of its area is covered by steep mountains and hills, whilst a narrow strip of plain remains on the island's western side.

Taiwan is situated on a latitude of between 21° and 25° north, in the sub-tropics. Its climate is therefore warm (the annual average temperature is up to 21° C) and humid, but also rich in rain and periodic winds. Such climatic conditions presented the islanders at the end of the immigration period (Fig 2.1) with fertile soil but also with the risk of infectious diseases and fatalities from mosquitoes, flies and venomous snakes. Frequent and regular typhoons occur in summer and autumn, and numbers of earthquakes occur all year round because of the island's situation in the active earthquake zone on the edge of the Pacific plate.

2-2 A brief history of the development of Taiwan

The Chinese were an agricultural people, and sailing out in search of new opportunities was neither common nor encouraged. Thus, although Taiwan had been known of since very early times [1], no serious levels of immigration to the island from mainland China took place until after 1624, at

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[1] Tung-kun 東鯤 is thought to be the earliest name of Taiwan used in the Han Book 漢書 (A.D. 32 - 39), but it is not completely certain; and only a few fishermen's visits to the island occasionally were mentioned in later historic books (b.17 1979: 21)

which time the Dutch took occupation of the south of the island.

The dangers associated with the Taiwan strait [2] and the threats from both the harsh environment and the native aborigines of the island may have been partly responsible for the low levels of immigration prior to this date, but the poor economic situation of Fujian 福建 and Kwangtung 廣東 forced their people to face the risks. Taiwan became one of the most important places for immigration for the Han people after 1661 when Cheng Ch'eng-kung 鄭成功 [3] took over the island and attempted to establish it as a base of resistance to the Ch'ing.

The Cheng Ch'eng-kung's occupation offered a significant stimulus to the immigration of the Han people. Due to his far-sighted and serious attitude to development, great numbers of people from the south-eastern coastal area of mainland China, including many women, came to Taiwan as part of a planned programme of immigration. Half the immigrants moved voluntarily, half involuntarily. According to rough estimates, the population would have been about twelve thousand at that time (h.59-1 1987: 8), and there were plans to develop the land from south to north as time went on. Unfortunately, time was too short to accomplish everything to Cheng's planned schedule before his death at the age of 38, and the régime was completely destroyed by the Ch'ing empire only decades later.

The Ch'ing dynasty conquered the island by defeating the rebellious Ming forces in 1683 (康熙 22). At the time the island was viewed as having little strategic or economic value and likely to be a source of problems for the central government of the new Ch'ing dynasty because of its historical role as a base for different groups of pirates, foreigners and rebels.

The decision by the emperor in 1684 not to cede the island was only

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2 Though the Taiwan strait is only about 150 sea-miles wide, it was a dangerous obstruction between the mainland and the island because of the threats of pirates, typhoons, and its two speedy currents. (d.24 1987:12)

3 Cheng (1624 - 1662) was a loyalist of the Ming dynasty. After the Ming empire was defeated by the Ch'ing in mainland in 1644, he retreated the troops to Taiwan, expelled the Dutch army, established a temporary government, and remained in the service of the Ming. He died in Taiwan just one year later (Taiwan - Historic City of Historic Sites, Tourism Bureau).

taken on the advice of the general Shih-lang 施琅[4], who argued that Taiwan should be a part of the territory of China for the purpose of national defence. (h 59-1 1987: 5)

Though the island was identified as a county of the Fujian province, it was never treated as such by the central authorities. The authorities not only repatriated Han people from Taiwan to their home-towns, but also passed a law forbidding all immigration in the first year of their rule. Strict immigration policies were imposed which lasted for 192 years and were only formally and completely renounced in 1874 (同治13)[5], when the importance of Taiwan's strategic and economic potential was finally recognised.

Several brilliant and far-sighted administrative heads, such as Liu Min-chuan 劉銘傳 (1836 - 1896), were sent to organise life on the island, and it was upgraded to become the twentieth province of China in December, 1886. Unfortunately this was just too late for any reformation to take place, as the island came under Japanese colonial rule only nine years later, ending the history of development of Han society in 1895. (Fig. 2-2)

2-3 The economic situation

Since the immigration restrictions limited incomers to small numbers in the beginning, the supply of land on the island far exceeded demand. The fertile soil and plentiful rains made agriculture much easier and gave much

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4 Shih, his father and his brother were all originally generals in Cheng's army. They became arrogant after winning great merits in several battles. They were all arrested for indiscipline, and only Shih was lucky enough to escape execution. Because of strong motivation for revenge and the knowledge about Taiwan and Cheng's troops, he was appointed one of the most senior commanders in charge of military actions against Cheng's empire, and won the last battle after several tough years. (d.22 1986: 27)

5 These policies varied through time according to the public security of Taiwan and the attitude of the head of Fujian government; they were loose in some periods, but most of them were, at least superficially, strict. There were 10 laws passed during the reign of the Ch'ing dynasty, but none of them was ever fully effective in stopping the flow of illegal immigrants. (d.32: 290 - 295)

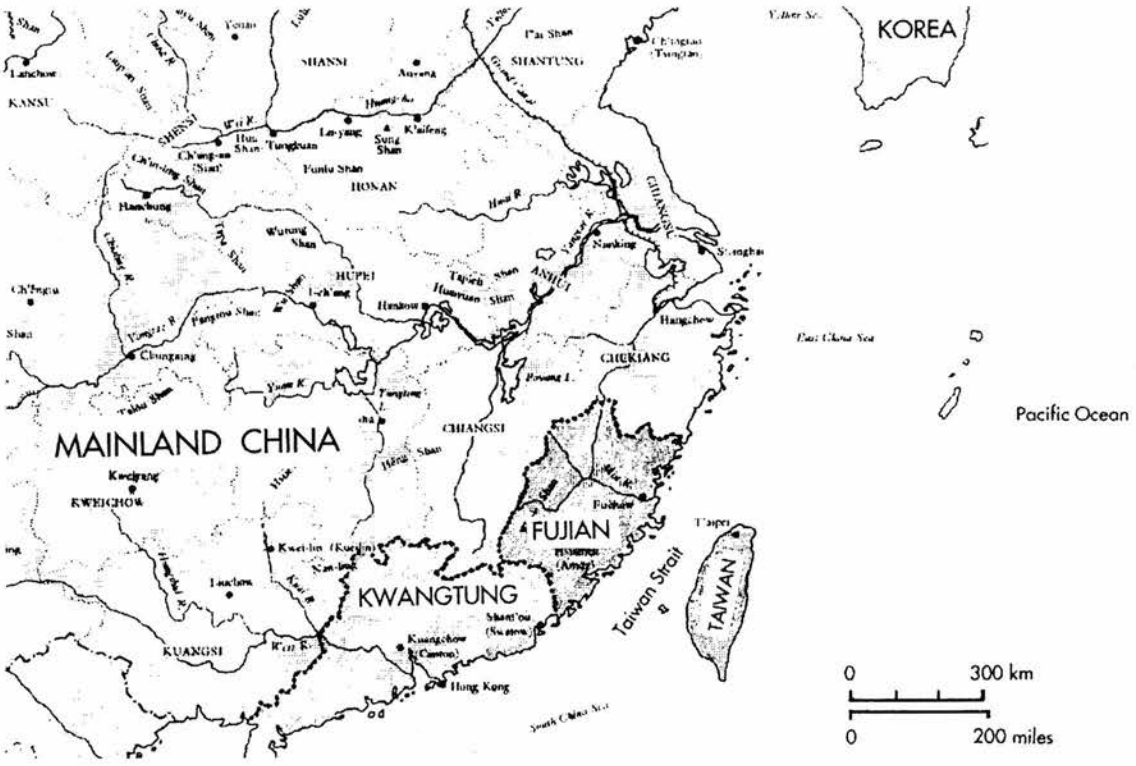

Fig. 2-1 General map of China and Taiwan (after The Genius of China - Robert Temple: 1991)

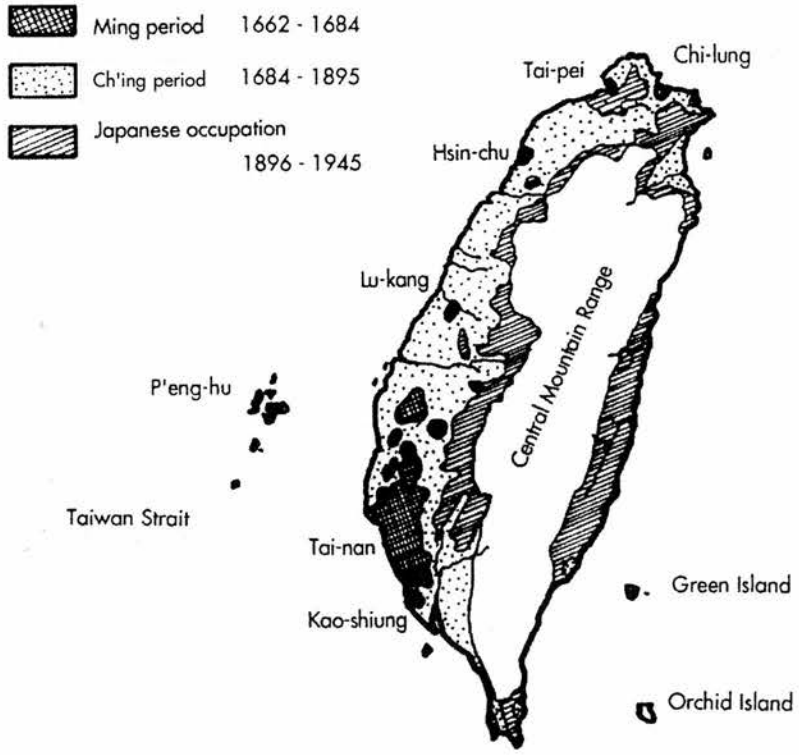

Fig. 2-2 The three stages of development in Taiwan (after b.17: 24)

higher yields than on the mainland [6], making life on the island relatively trouble-free. "Money in Taiwan flows over people's ankles" became a common saying among the Fujian people and gave them a strong incentive to sneak into Taiwan illegally without regard for either the legal or natural dangers of the journey .

The ease and speed with which the Han people in Taiwan could become rich together with the extremely unbalanced man-woman ratio, led to a lifestyle which was decadent and extravagant. The Record of Chu-lo County 諸羅縣誌 describes how "as a result of their small number, women no longer weave, but pay attention only to showing off their beauty...meals and dresses are luxurious, banquets have become popular in all levels of society...It has gradually become normal that one meal costs a whole year's savings..." (h.59-1 1987: 22)

However, such economic prosperity was concentrated in the first thirty years of the rule of the Ch'ing, and only in the three most developed cities (h.59-1 1987: 23). Legal limits on shipping led to a very short supply of merchandise resulting in a knock-on effect of excessively high market prices. Such inflation did little to curb the island's extravagant habits. On the contrary, gambling and opium became universally popular (h.59-1 1987:23), though as the numbers of incomers increased, competition for resources increased and in a short time many Taiwanese immigrants were reduced to poverty. The result was deteriorating public security and social order from the time of the late period of K'ang-hsi 康熙 (about 1710).

Despite the signs of a decline in the economy by the early era of Yung-cheng 雍正 (1723 - 1735) [7] (h.59-1 1987: 23), making a living in Taiwan

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[6] According to the travelogue The Talk of T'zu-k'an 赤嵌筆談 (1700's), "He who does not fertilise or weed his field but just lets it grow naturally, harvest still achieves a better than land can offer in the mainland." (h.59-1 1987: 22)

[7] Economic decline is also indicated by the local rebellions. For example, in the rebellion of Chu Yi-kui 朱一桂 in 1722 (康熙. 60), at all main leaders of the group were older than fort (regarded as old at the time), yet only 27.2% of them owned property, and 68.1% were married. The affidavit of the later similar rebellion of Wu-fu-shen 吳福生 in 1732 (雍正 10) shows that only 26.8% of the main leaders of the group owned property; only 26.9% were rich enough to marry. Though there were seven people owning property in each case, the area of land owned by the former was 2.4 times that of the latter. This means that although almost

was still easier than staying in one's homeland. There was a strong demand for labour for the new development in northern Taiwan and areas deep inside the aboriginal domains and as people still believed that Taiwan was a paradise of easy money, illegal immigrants continued to come to this island in great numbers, year after year.

The system of tenant farming [8] was one of the most important factors in the economic development of Taiwan. In brief, legal developments became the privilege of the *k'en-shou* (the chief-developer) 墾首. The local government normally protected their rights not only because they were the only people who owned the official lease and really paid the rent, but also because they were usually powerful local civil leaders. The government frequently had to ask them to help to maintain the local public security owing to their great manpower and army forces. (h.41 1981:210 - 212)

As the drainage system on the island gradually improved, the same size of field produced greater yields and a tenant peasant former could, therefore, afford to sub-let part of his field to another new tenant farmer, and thereby make himself a landlord and a tenant farmer at the same time (h.41 1981: 213). As the large numbers of illegal immigrants led to overpopulation, so labour became very cheap, and terms for the leasing of fields commonly became disadvantageous to the tenant farmers. The inequality in the distribution of wealth made for a socio-economic structure in the form of a very steep pyramid, and led to the centralisation of capital in society.

Trade was the magic wand aiding the economic miracle of Taiwan in the later stages of the immigration years, especially after 1860, when Taiwan was forced to open its treaty ports to the Western countries in accordance with the Treaty of Tientsin 天津條約 (h.60 1988: 191). Agricultural production was guided by the market trends of international trade, and

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all the uprisings in the mid Ch'ing period were in the name of restoring the Ming dynasty, they were carried out more for reasons of economics rather than politics.(h.59-1 1987: 28 - 31)

[8] The land had been classified into two categories in Taiwan: the "aboriginal-field" 番田 was the land belonging to plain aborigines, all other lands belonged to the government were known as the "official-field" 官田. The Ch'ing authorities acknowledged the ownership of aborigines, and offered the rest to immigrants for development. (h.41 1981: 211)

became the best aid to successful trade development (h.60 1988: 193). Co-operation amongst producers turned the island into a full-time production and retail workshop, and one of the most important international markets in Asia during the nineteenth century. That also gave merchants a new, leading role as a social elite throughout the later years of immigration.(b.15 1990: 39)

In spite of its successes as a trading entity, however, Taiwan remained an essentially agricultural economy throughout the immigration period. The characteristics of an agricultural society pervaded everything and most Taiwan immigrants typically exhibited the features of subjugation to authority [9] and a sense of fatalism (h.40 1985: 7 - 9). These traits made Taiwan immigrants conservative, passive, superstitious, and complacent, and forged a strong allegiance to traditional values. On the other hand, the successful economics of the island led many Taiwan immigrants to exhibit characteristics of decadence and arrogance and an acceptance of many of the side-effects of social and economic inequity, such as concubinage, children selling and prostitution.

2-4 The population structure and the female position in society

Due to the influence of the Proposal for the Prohibition of Sailing 論開海禁疏 promulgated by General Shih-lang in the first year of Ch'ing rule, a ban on immigration became the universal policy throughout the Ch'ing era, and even the first comers of the Ming dynasty were forced into repatriation to their home-town. Whilst, for a variety of reasons, prohibition was less rigorously enforced at certain times than others, the basic policy remained the same, and prevailing attitudes to the position of women immigrants remained rigid at all times. The central authorities' anxieties may have resulted from the quite reasonable fear that if women emigrated to Taiwan along with men, they would settle on this new land and rapidly rebuild their

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[9] As the system of tenant farming was disadvantageous to the tenant farmer, only their subjugation could guarantee better chances of tenancy. Unfair conditions were therefore normally accepted without question, tenants even had to carry out landlord's personal duties in most conditions. A system of economic authority was thus established, and the subjugation became a distinctive characteristic of Taiwanese immigrants. (h.40 1985: 7)

society. New localised bases of power could then be very easily re-established, given the Fujian people's combative nature, releasing forces of revolution. In this sense the virtual imprisonment of women in their home towns cast them in the role of "hostages" who could be used as a kind of insurance against potential uprisings (h.59-1 1987: 6).

The strict prohibition laws and the natural dangers of travel meant it was only possible for small groups of young single men to be stowaways successfully for much of the early period. The traditional lineage was therefore prevented from being created or re-formed on the island, due to the inevitably disproportionate balance of age and sex in the population.

Women became very precious in Taiwan in this period because they were in very small number [10], and the difficulties of smuggling them into this island were still great. In addition to the influence of the social customs of extravagance, this meant marriage was not at all easy, and was expensive. The Record of Taiwan Fu 台灣府誌 (by Chiang Yu-ying 蔣毓英) reported that "...Marriage depends on fortune only, neither a man's character nor his social position is considered any more...The first step to marriage in Taiwan is always to discuss the betrothal money." (h.59-2 1987: 94). Very materialistic and rigid secular rules grew up regarding marriage, and did not improve for the poor even in later difficult years. Women were well treated because they had become sought-after commodities with a price on their heads, but were not valued for their cultural role or social position.

Though the convention that "money was the only consideration in marriage" allowed the rich to afford more than one wife, marrying at all, or the acquisition of a second wife, was still generally difficult because of the simple shortage of women. Thus, to adopt a child from any possible source became the best and often the only solution for most of the immigrants facing the problem of perpetuating their lineages [11]. It grew to become a

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10 According to The Record of the pacification of Taiwan 平台紀略 by Lan Ting-yuan 藍鼎元 in the 1720's, the number of women in the immigrant society ran only into the hundreds, despite a total population of several million. (h.59-1 1987: 9)

11 The traditional lineage and laws did not admit adoption where the adopted children did not belong to the lineage, yet there was no alternative in the society with an unbalanced composition of ages and sexes as Taiwan. Therefore though it was a kind of "bargain adoption",

distinctive and popular feature of this immigrant society to adopt a daughter as a future daughter-in-law for the adopter's son (cf. section 2-5.3). The market demands on the island even resulted in the gradual emergence of a semi-public form of professional child-dealing.

Social disturbances and natural disasters in the 1750's were, however, to lead to inflation, and many people were reduced to poverty. By this time, there were third generation immigrants on the island, descendants of the first settlers, plus the continuing influx of newcomers, bringing ever increasing pressures on the population and greater competition for making a living. In these circumstances, the poor turned to selling their offspring, especially female children, and re-introduced the custom of "drowning a daughter at birth" (a. 11 1993: 115) because of their un-marketability. This suggests that the number of women must have increased significantly by that time. [12]

After the Tao-kuang 道光 era of the 1820's, the bottom fell out of the child-trade market as a result of oversupply. "People-dealing" ceased to be solely for the purpose of supplying descendants, more young women were now bought as wives [13], concubines, maidservants, or prostitutes; and young men as servants or even as extra, expendable manpower for armed fighting [14]. Instead of importing children from the mainland as in earlier stages, Taiwan was not only able to supply the demand, but also

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the adopted son relinquished all relationship with his original family, inherited the adopter's surname and was treated as a real descendant. (h.59-1 1987: 58 - 63)

12 Most of the estimates of population in the Ch'ing dynasty could hardly be accurate since they neglected illegal immigration and excluded women; this means that the female population can only be inferred from external evidence, such as travelogues.

13 This was a marriage mediated by professional matchmakers, and usually cost only about 1/6 (average) of the expense of a normal marriage. (h.59-2 1987:159)

14 Frequent armed fighting caused great numbers of dead and wounded. According to custom, the living have to be sacrificed to make the number of the dead equal on both sides. At first, it could be treated as an honour when a man was chosen, but this sacrifice gradually became impossible to afford. The larger clans began to buy boys as adopted sons, and treat them as secondary family members. They were ordered to carry out the heavy and dangerous duties in peace time, and sent to fight in the front line in the fighting. If their clan had fewer dead, it was they who would be sent as compensation. But even if they were loyal to the clan and died for it, they could not be worshipped in ancestral hall because they were not genuine family. It was not, therefore, a normal relationship between adoptive parents and adoptive children. (h.59-2 1987: 142)

started exporting to the mainland (h.59-2 1987: 128 - 130). The polarisation of rich and poor made for an equal balance of supply and demand, and ensured a steady market throughout the whole later years of the immigration period.

The population stabilised after the Hsien-feng era 咸豐 (1850's), suggesting that the slow increase in numbers was mainly due to natural reproduction by the early settlers and not directly to the addition of new immigrants [15]. Statistics of the Record of Taiwan Province also show that the balance between the genders and ages remained almost the same thereafter; the number of women even outweighing men slightly in some places in the Kuang-hsu era (1870's), such as Peng-hu 澎湖 (h.59-2 1987:133). From the point of view of its population structure, Taiwan became a more stable and healthy habitat. However, such phenomena as the selling of women for profit, active prostitution, the popularity of concubinage, the "marriage" of "child daughter-in-law", the ubiquity and cheapness of maidservants, and "drowning a daughter at birth" suggest that the increase in the female population only served to increase the hardships faced by women themselves.

2-5 Social signs regarding women in immigrant Taiwan

2-5.1 **Prostitution**

Under the traditional lineage structure and patriarchy, women were the personal property of the men to whom they attached. The privileges of a woman's body, and in particular her sexual organs, belonged exclusively to her husband. There was consequently a total ban on her body being touched or even seen by any other men. However the sharing and leasing of wives became a special and unusual local feature of Taiwan in the early 18th century of immigration due to the scarcity of women. (a.28 1991: 9)

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[15] The population of Taiwan was estimated at about 120,000 in the 1680's, two million in the 1810's, and 2,545,000 in 1892 (h.53: 81). The ratio of increase was 2.64% in the 30 years from 1781 to 1810, falling to 0.87% in the 30 years from 1811 to 1840, and to only 0.39% in the 60 years spanning from 1841 to 1905. The highest increase occurred during the years of Ch'ien-lung and Chia-ch'ing due to the flow of immigration, but the constant rises in numbers arose mainly from the natural birth of children to the setters.(h.57 1988: 299)

Pressurised by the need to make a living and attracted by the good price which sexual services could command in a time of high market demand, poor and needy Fujian immigrant (also called *fu-lao* 福佬) were persuaded to lease out their women to richer but spouseless K'o-chia 客家 people (what Kwangtung immigrants were called) who had come to Taiwan later than them and had been more successful through their greater diligence and ambition.

This was a hidden response to desperate and irrevocable poverty, and owed nothing to the sexual permissiveness or self-consciousness of women. However, the phenomenon of sharing and leasing wives gradually died out, when the population structure had balanced, and more women were available for selling to brothels as full-time prostitutes.

Though the prevalence of prostitution in Taiwan was strongly associated with the development of an erotic culture since the time of the Sung dynasty (cf. section 3-3), the chief cause was that of the island's own environmental limitations. The stress resulting from hard labour and the dangers of the environment needed a release whilst the prevailing tradition of high-priced marriages meant that is remained difficult for an impoverished young man to marry. Prostitution was seen as giving the most satisfactory answer to society's needs, something that was convenient, demanded no responsibility and could supply a variety of sexual demands (a.34 1993: 167). It was thus encouraged, and flourished throughout the period of Taiwanese immigration, lasting until the Japanese occupation.

There were several other cultural reasons why prostitution continued to be welcomed in later years. These can be listed as follows:

(i) The brothel was not only considered as a place for sexual satisfaction, but also as a place for banquet and entertainment; and so it became a refuge for men seeking to escape family duties and stresses.

(ii) Social intercourse with strangers always started for the Chinese with a banquet in a public place. One could be invited to a person's home for detailed discussion only after the relationship had been confirmed. The brothel was always the first choice for initial meeting for the Chinese because of the comprehensive services it offered.

(iii) It was common for Chinese men to be attracted towards and to

sympathise with prostitutes because of their frequent depiction in "immoral" but popular literature as being talented, feminine and spiritually virtuous. This attraction became a compulsion to many men and was a strong encouragement for them to frequent the brothels.

(iv) The advice of Taoism that a man could benefit from the flourishing *yin air* of the prostitute encouraged men to take advantage of this form of casual sex (a.27 1986: 110). And finally: -

(v) The Chinese marriage did not formally embrace the concept of love between the married couple. Prostitutes were also usually more attractive and interesting than the wife who was the "good" woman bounded by ethics and ritual. A man was tacitly permitted, by the society, to seek "true" love by his own will outside the family, when his duty of descent was completed.

Large-scale, active prostitution ensured a strong market demand for women, led to the continuation of the practice of selling women as goods during the whole period of immigration, and served to reinforce in a significant way women's inferior position in the lineage and society.

2-5.2 **Foot-binding**

According to historical materials, food-binding (*chan-chiao*) was believed to have originated between the dynasties of Sui 隋 and Tang 唐 (approximately 600 A.D.), and became a fashion after the Yuan dynasty 元. During the Ming dynasty, it began to be regarded not only as the only measure of beauty, but also as a symbol of sexuality (a.24 1983: 144 - 146). Poems and popular literature started, with increasing frequency, to describe two bent feet under the skirt. The female Manchus did not bind their feet partly because of their nomadic character, partly because of the Ch'ing government passed laws forbidding foot-binding when they became the rulers of China. Such laws proved ineffectual to the Han women, for whom bound feet even became an easily recognised symbol of status and of the distinction of the Han people as a whole (a.9 1986: 233)[16]. The custom's

16 Foot-binding had been a symbol of status since the Ming dynasty. In places such as Eastern-Chekiang 浙東, society even forbade male beggars to study, and female beggars to bind their feet because of their inferiority (a.1 1979: 187). In Fujian society, women were divided into three categories - those with bound feet, those with normal feet 平足, and barbarians 韃婆.

popularity with the Han people reached its peak in the Ch'ing dynasty (a.49 1991: 8). In the case of Taiwan the habit originated directly from the states (*chou*) of Jan 漳 and Ch'uan 泉, where the custom of foot-binding was most popular in the Fujian province (e.13 1976:144). (K'o-chia women, the much smaller group of Han people from Kwangtung, were an exception because of their different local customs)

Whilst aesthetics and sexual interests might have been the significant reasons for the origination of food-binding and were important incentives for men to promote the custom, it is possible to argue that these were, in fact, secondary to the true motivation and purpose of its promotion. As The Daughter Chin (the early Ch'ing dynasty) stated "...to bind a woman's feet not for the reason of beauty, but for fear of her freely going out of door, that is why we need a thousand binds for restraint...". To make it difficult for women to move was the method, to keep them virtuous was the goal. "Strong-feet", which is what the Taiwanese called capable women (e.13 1976: 144), clearly indicated the anxiety felt about the connection between free movement of women and loss of virtue. As a woman should never take off her embroidered shoes, even when she was sleeping (sleep-shoes with soft soles taking the place of shoes used in daytime), they became one of the woman's most personal and secret possessions. They could even be treated as a part of the body, and were for her husband exclusively. To bestow shoes to a man became a sign of dedication, and for a woman's shoes to owned by a man who was not her husband could be treated as evidence of adultery and could directly threaten a woman's honour or even her life. The embroidered shoe therefore became a symbol of chastity. (a.24 1983:156) (Fig. 2-3)

Owing to the difficulties of illegal immigration and greater demands of labour, the lower standards of appreciation for female beauty had to be adopted, women with bound feet were rare in the early stage in Taiwan. The Travelogue of Pi-hai 裨海紀遊 (Yu Yung-he 郁永河, 1690's) described how "...only very few women had bound feet; a woman could be regarded as beautiful though she used only a three-foot strip of cloth to bind her feet

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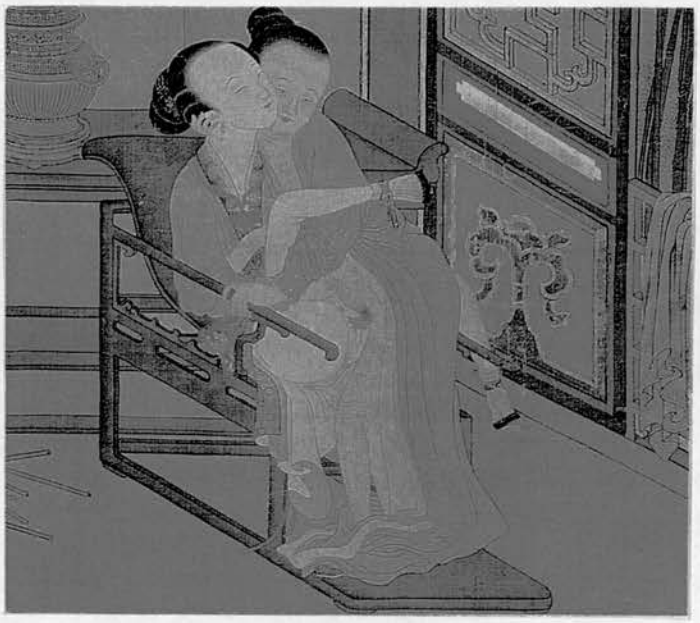
Bound feet were regarded as the label of women of noble and civilised clans coming from central China.(e.13 1976: 145)

The embroidered shoe and the bound food (after e.13: 153)



A erotic print of the Ch'ing dynasty

A erotic print of the Ming dynasty

Fig. 2-3 Women did not take off their embroidered shoes even when they were nude (from The Collection of Secret Games, Taipei: Golden Maple, 1993)

(meaning it was rough)..." (a.7 1993: 55). However, the survey showed that Taiwan was later to embrace the notion of foot-binding, and it became one of the most persistent customs in the whole island during the nineteenth century. [17]

This binding of feet had an increasingly deleterious effect on women's health, and made almost all of them semi-handicapped. However, it was still considered necessary, being the only recognised measure of female beauty. Under the "rules" of matchmaking in Taiwan's custom, it was usually only asked how small the feet were, not how the woman looked (e.13 1976: 149). The bound foot was also the sign of the status and ancestry of the women and of her family. It affected not only whether she could be accepted and married, but also the price of the marriage and the honour of the family. Even a woman in a poor family, who might easily expect to be faced lots of hard housework after she married, had to submit to the convention that "small-feet is lady, big-feet is maid" (a.11 1993: 70), and have her feet bound as a guarantee of marriage. As foot-binding was thought to be directly connected to the future happiness of woman, it also became one of the most important and exclusive duties for a mother to her loving daughter, and must not be interrupted by soft-heartedness or pampering (a.9 1986: 238). Foot-binding was so prevalent that it became a strict ritual, and symbolised the most powerful suppression of women in the nineteenth century Taiwan.

2-5.3 **Child daughter-in-law**

The matrimonial form of "child daughter-in-law" (*t'ung-yang-hsi*) 童養媳 involved the adoption of a young girl from another family to be the

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17 According to the survey of the population conducted in Taiwan by the Japanese in 1905, foot-binding was carried out by 68.0% of all female Fujian immigrants on the island as a whole, and in areas, such as Yi-lan 宜蘭, the figure was even higher at 83.2%; 79.1% of women with bound feet were aged between 60 and 70, and only 14.5% were aged under 10. Judging from the binding normally started at their three or four years old (a.11 1993: 69), it reached the peak in the 1850's, and gradually declined after 1895. The data also showed that 79.2% of widows, 74.9% of women with a living spouse, and only 30.6% of unmarried women had bound feet, indicating that the custom did have connections with beauty and marriage; also there was a figure of 55% in labouring families showing that the cultural significance of foot-binding took priority over practicalities. (a.7 1993: 56).

future wife of the adopter's son when both of them were adults. She would live with the *tui-t'ou* (matching-head) 對頭, her future husband, in a different room as half-sister, half-wife. The adopter would treat her as a daughter and a daughter-in-law at one and the same time. As she was raised by her adopter from a young age, the emotional ties were expected to guarantee greater loyalty to the family in the future, and reduce the conflict between her and her mother-in-law to a minimum because of their mother-and-daughter like relationship. Since the system was part of the pre-wedding process, the cost of adoption was taken into account in deciding the cost of the betrothal itself (h.59-2 1987: 85). The "real wedding" when they were adult was usually held in the adopter's home on the eve of the new year, because a simplified rite would be allowed then as there was no god at home in that period. Bountiful food was prepared for the occasion anyway. This convenient form of wedding that had almost no ceremony, guests or extra costs, was called *chien-cho-tui* (picking-together) 揀做堆 (a11 1993: 39).

The system was gradually established in the Sung dynasty and became popular after the Yuan dynasty (h.59-2 1988: 88). As it was more humane than to drown daughters at birth, and was believed to lead to improvements in the future domestic relationship, it was not opposed by either the lineage of the rich or the poor (h.59-2 1988: 93). Moreover the system entailed legal kinship much earlier than normal marriage, and to Chinese for whom the status of "family" was the key to all social relationships (cf. section 4-4), it became a very practical and effective tool to gain or maintain one's social position (a.11 1993: 44). Being encouraged by the expensive and ceremonious ordinary marriage, this matrimonial system was widely welcomed by the Taiwan immigrants after the early 18th century.

This form of matrimony was totally accepted as being compatible with the traditional values of the lineage system. It was acknowledged that "...though the marriage ceremony is incomplete, her status of daughter-in-law is certain because the betrothal money has been accepted, and she has been sent to be raised in her husband's family already...therefore she should be treated as a married woman..." (Taiwan's Local Law. Taipei: Taiwan Bank, 1961 - h.59-2 1987: 97). A "child daughter-in-law" was qualified to be an ancestor of her husband's family even if her future husband died

before their real marriage, and she would have to do all a wife's duty for the rest of her life. If she was to marry another man later, this would be treated as her second marriage in name.(a.11 1993: 46)

Whilst the system had some limited benefits for women their essential position remained that of property. Except rich families that did it for reasons of gathering social resource, "child daughters-in-law" still found it hard to get rid of the image of being bought from the poor families as goods and were likely to be treated as free labour from a very young age (h.59-b 1987: 98). Sometime the "child daughters-in-law" were unfortunate enough to be raped by their adopted father or maltreated by their adopted mother because of their non-blood relationship, and despised by their future husbands or were sold out again because of their expendable role. The "child daughter-in-law", despite the beneficial side of the system that has been discussed above, was clearly frequently a victim of lineage values.

2-6 Summary

Whilst the strength of the Ch'ing dynasty on the mainland, especially after the Opium Wars of 1842, apparently deteriorated nationally, in Taiwan, the 19th century marked the beginning of a new era of transformation for the island, from a society of immigrants to a permanent and stable community (h.57 1988: 185). Five social phenomena indicate, evidently, that its less sophisticated and more provincial sub-culture was gradually returning to the "mother" traditions, and its permanent Han society was gradually formed in this period:

(i) Due to the laws of prohibition and the dangers of travel, most immigrants did not risk going back to their homeland, and had only recently managed, with difficulty, to raise their families on the island. In the early nineteenth century, the offspring of the original immigrants gradually took the place of the incomers to become the majority of Taiwan's inhabitants. (cf. footnote 15)

(ii) Successful trade following the opening of the treaty ports led to the development of northern Taiwan. That prompted the building of new market towns and encouraged people to travel more frequently and further than before. Frequent social contact broke down the divisions imposed by

the original domain (h.60 1988: 204) and new local groupings gradually formed. The gods from different homelands who were worshipped only by different homeland group in early days were welcome to all categories within the same worship-domain (h.57 1988: 293).

(iii) More and more descendants of big families succeeded in passing examinations and becoming local government officers in mainland, while civil leaders changed their role from local chieftain to local gentry by earning great merit in wars. Such achievements allowed men to aspire to prosperity for their lineages in their new homeland, and the necessary clannish bodies arisen from frequent armed fighting in the early stage of immigration provided them a best basis for this lineage development in the 19th century Taiwan.

(iv) Both the original ancestors of the homeland and the first ancestor of Taiwan were worshipped in the new ancestral hall, and the Taiwan ancestor gradually came to be regarded as more important (h.57 1988: 293). The identity of immigrants was closely connected with their passion for the new land.

(v) The most elaborate and glorious traditional buildings in Taiwan were built in the nineteenth century, indicating the power of the economy and an intention to settle permanently. The scale and spatial organisation of the houses also showed that big lineages were no longer rare.

Without doubt, economic progress was one of the most important factors in encouraging immigrants to establish themselves and reaffirm their cultural identity. The interaction between localisation [18] (popular culture) and "motherland-isation" (elite culture) of the immigrant culture became an important social sign of self-re-identification of immigrants in the nineteenth century Taiwan society (h.58 1988: 308). However, a complicated ideology resulted from a combination of superiority complex amongst the proud rich, and an inferiority complex amongst these of the status of merchant [19] and

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[18] The idea of Taiwan's localisation was argued by Dr. Ch'en Ch'i-nan in 1975, but the word of "indigenisation" he used in his studies seems wrong because there was nothing about Han culture to be really initiated in this island.

[19] The merchant was a new role which emerged in the Sung dynasty. Most merchants could read and write because of the need of business, and many of them were scholars who had failed in the bureaucratic examinations. However, the Chinese believed "reading is above everything", despite their wealth, the social contribution, and their Confucian beliefs, they never succeeded in replacing the leading role of the scholar in traditional Chinese society (d.21

their inferior ancestry (h.60 1988: 207). As a consequence, the latter seemed to have taken refuge in a reformation which made them adhere closely to the ancient Chinese tradition, and led to the values of the lineage, from an androcentric point of view at least, being generally very important in this island. It is certainly the case that Taiwan had become a completely traditional Han society after the 1850's.

That little attention was paid to female issues during the period in which traditional, patriarchical values were being reconfirmed was almost certainly due to the fact that women were viewed as lowly, humble and expendable. Their small numbers in the early years did not free women from being treated as mere implements of reproduction (the high price of marriage owing mainly to their value of giving offspring) and, in later times, as the personal property of men (the universal social phenomenon of selling one's own wife and daughters). Socially acceptable notions such as concubinage and foot-binding, together with male attitudes towards widowhood and chastity, which became popular and widely regarded in the "back to origins" period, suggest that traditional Chinese attitude about gender could be applied much more on a cultural recognition rather than its real social economic situation and population structure.

1987: 526 - 540). This could be an important remote factor in Taiwan's attachment to the "great tradition" (Robert Redfield 1956 - d.21 1987: 129) of the mainland led by merchants - the main category of social elite in 19th century Taiwan.

Chapter 3

Traditional Chinese attitude towards gender and sex

Traditional Chinese attitudes towards women were dominated by five factors: (i) the philosophy of the relationship between *yang* and *yin*, from ancient Chinese cosmology, (ii) the role of women in culture as defined by Confucian values, (iii) sex for the sake of male sensuality, (iv) the superstitious taboos on "uncleanness" arising from sexual discrimination, and (v) sex as an absolutely necessary function for the reproduction of the lineage. The distinctions between these five factors were blurred and they were mutually interactive.

3-1 The notion of yin-yang and gender

The idea of *yin-yang* 陰陽 stemmed from a belief in the duality of natural phenomena in the ancient cultural area of the Chou 周 in northern China. The Chou people observed all types of phenomena and analysed the relationships of all pairs. They concluded that the combination of the male and the female was the only source of all creation. It was a simple logic of 1+1=3, establishing the law that "all things are a product of the combination of *yin* and *yang*". For example, the twin experiences of a hot sun and cold moon, warm day and cool evening were connected with the *yin-yang*. The concept was similarly associated with the contrasts such as hot fire and cold water; fire burning upwards and water flowing downwards; sky as up and earth as down. From a process of stereotyping male animals as good at fighting and female animals as yielding; *yang* became associated with masculinity, with "hot", "up", and "clean", whilst *yin* became characterised as feminine, "cold", "down", and "dirty". The symbols of *yin* and *yang* finally encompassed almost all which was dual in nature and society (c.4 1989: 28 - 32). However, though the notion of *yin-yang* was formed in very early times, it remained an inextricable part of daily life for a very long period.

Through such conceptualisation, subjective observation and intuitive experience were presented within the framework of a supposedly logical and objective system of thought which proposed that "*yin* and *yang* exist within everything in the universe, from an object as big as the sky or the earth, to one as small as an individual being...*yin* and *yang* dominate and overcome each other...thus, the intercourse of *yin* and *yang* bears everything...". Such theory gradually acquired the status of an abstract philosophy under the name of Lao-tzu 老子, and was further promoted by Chuang-tzu 莊子 in the later era of the Warring-states 戰國 in southern China. (c.4 1989: 32 - 35)

The theory of Yin-yang was merged with that of another long-held concept, *wu-hsing* 五行 (five-elements) [1], by Chou-yen 鄒衍 in the late Warring-states (about B.C. 275 - 270). Together they were developed as the school of *yin-yang-wu-hsieng*, which became established in the Q'in 秦 era. This described the universe in well-defined but complex terms as an ordered system of space and time, with all nature, society and man classified in terms of relationships within this system. This, then, moulded the Chinese's concrete ideas of cosmology (c.4 1989: 36). Cosmology, however, never became a truly independent academic discipline, but was continuously developed and then merged as part of Confucianism, legalism (*fa-chia*), medicine, divination and astronomy, to become a common foundation for all kinds of knowledge. It was because of this commonality that cosmology became the master key to the understanding of the special Chinese system of philosophy that embraced politics, science, arts and even pathology.

Since all dual relationships were taken to originate from the difference between two sexes, all relationship could overlap or transfer according to the same framework of philosophy. When it came, therefore, to considering the relationships between two genders of human beings

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[1] *Wu-hsing* arose almost simultaneously with *yin-yang* in northern China. It adopted gold, wood, water, fire and earth as five basic elements of the universe, and argued that "five elements beget each other and at the same time suppress each other depending on the particular circulation". Everything, e.g. colours, smells, sounds, organs of the body, orientations etc., was given attributes of the numbers 1 to 5 and included in the theory, even changes of empires were explained as being due to the circulation of five elements.(c.4 1989: 32 - 35)

themselves, one might expect the same ideas to apply. However, such philosophy seems to indicate that the natural laws of harmonious and equal dual relationships for peace and eternity were for all except mankind.

This may be the result of the Chinese belief in humanism [2], namely that the natural laws in the material world realised from observation and classification were different from the relationships of human beings based on a different system of values.

The humanised attitude to the *yin-yang* relationship as one not of harmony but of opposites was conceived by Tung Chung-shu 董仲舒 [3] in the Han dynasty. He advocated that "the nobility of the sky and the humility of the earth was an unavoidable fact. Therefore, though a husband was of inferior class, he was still superior to his wife because he belonged to *yang*, and she, even if a noble, was still inferior to him because she belonged to *yin*; that was why a wife must always subordinate herself to her husband". From that time, the dual relationship between two sexes of Chinese, encouraged by Confucianism, became one of conflict and inequality, dominance and subordination.

In short, men and women were treated as elements of the whole system before the Han dynasty. Their exception from the natural laws had never been emphasised or discussed in isolation. But after that time, the ancient *yin-yang* ideal of harmony and equality were regarded as concepts only of philosophy and the advocacy of metaphysics, and ceased to be applied to the gender structure of mankind. This was the case for the rest of Chinese history, but applied most particularly after the rise of rationalism in the Sung dynasty.

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2 The universe of the Chinese could be abstractly divided into two different worlds: the human world for mankind, and the material world for all others. All things of the material world were merely tools serving human beings. (f.31 1983: 588)

3 Tung was the prime minister of the Han Dynasty who recommended Confucianism to the Emperor as the only royal school, and led to its becoming the orthodoxy throughout the rest of Chinese history. (a.25 1988: 153)

3-2 Confucianism and female ethical education

Though it was a period of obscurity and uncertainty, it is believed that it was in the time of the Chou era that principles of patriarchy became established (a.9 1986: 21). After Confucius had initiated conventions in the Chou era, the system of lineage developed and the "system of ceremonial forms" 禮制 was established. Almost all concepts regarding the role of women were also formulated at this time.

Since other schools of thought proliferated in the later years of the Warring-states Era, the Chinese were still free to adopt any learning they wished. But when the government was established as a mighty central authority, the position of the emperor was honoured as supreme as the Son of Heaven, and Confucianism was honoured as the only royal school in the Western Han dynasty. From this time Chinese understanding became solely based on these philosophical theories for two thousand years. Thus, no matter how formal or informal the subject, all kinds of learning were closely tied to Confucianism, and readers identified themselves only with Confucianism. As the Chinese were used to praising antiquity but despising the present day, it was expected that all studies should have their ideas rooted in the classics, to prove their validity. The concepts of Confucianism became central to all values, and Confucius's works became the Bible of all knowledge.

The Han dynasty represented an important landmark in identifying the traditional role of women. During this period the concept of "ethical education" 禮教 was formulated, and the ideal of the virtuous and yielding woman was, for the first time, formally and publicly praised by the Emperor. From this time, two main concepts regarding women were commonly adopted. The first was that women should be extremely gentle and yielding, in accordance with the standards of ethics. A women did not have to learn how to be a complete person but just how to be a good daughter-in-law (a.9 1986: 38). The second was the most inequitable notion of the lineage system, that a woman should not be treated as a *tzu* 子. The meaning of *tzu* was "flourishing and productive", an honourable term for a man who could continue the family line by providing male descendants. A woman was merely a person subject to a man; she had no independent personality, and

could only be acknowledged after she was attached to a man. As it was described by the classics, "*yin* is humble, and can be an entity in its own right only after it attaches to *yang*" (Pai-hu-tung 白虎通嫁娶篇 - the Han dynasty). The female role was solely in helping the man to achieve his sacred responsibilities to the lineage.(a.9 1986: 2)

In this period, two important books regarding female virtue were published, and became the texts for female upbringing from that time on until the Ch'ing era. The first was The Biography of Women 列女傳, written by Liu Xiang 劉向 in the Former Han era (circa 30 A.D.); the second was The Admonishment of Women 女誡, written by Pan Chao 班超 in the Later Han era (circa 90 A.D.). Though the latter was the work of a female author, ideas of "the noble man and the humble woman", "the husband as the guide of the wife" and the idea of "three obedience and four virtues" 三從四德, and so on, were presented systematically and in depth in the book, becoming an eternal lead weight round the necks of Chinese women for thousands of years. The additional notion that "...a husband's attitude to his wife was a favour, and a wife should always be grateful for it..." became one of the most destructive of influences, leading to neither passion nor love but only favour between couples in Chinese marriages.(a.9 1986: 45 - 50)

No further new books about the upbringing of women were published in the seven hundred years following the publication of these two works, but attitudes and standards relating to women continued to follow the principles advocated by them. In the Tang dynasty, three significant new works [4] were written and their ideas were promoted, but even these did not change matters, it was just a case of more details being discussed and clearly regulated (a.9 1986: 113 - 118). Nevertheless, an important feature throughout that period was that notions about chastity were not yet strongly formed, women who had re-married continued to be commonly accepted by society (a.9 1986: 119 - 121), and a more forgiving attitude to women was still adopted. All of these changed after the Sung dynasty.

In the first fifty years of the Sung dynasty, the scholars of the Sung

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[4] They are The Female Norm 女則 by Queen Ch-ang-sun 長孫皇后, The Female Filial Duties 女孝經 by Madam Cheng 鄭氏, and The Female Analects of Confucius 女論語 by Sung Jo-hua 宋若華.(a.9 1986: 114)

adopted a tolerant attitude in their assessments of female virtue, and women who had re-married did not yet suffer cruel criticism by society. The following twenty years were a stage for the debate, isolation and reformation of the thoughts of the Sung schools, and many different attitudes towards women were apparent in the society at the same time. The school of rationalism (*li-xue*) 理學, headed by Chou Tun-i 周敦頤, eventually won the argument and became honoured as the seat of orthodoxy from around 1060 - 1070 A.D. From that time only the ideals and values of rationalism formally guided and dominated the notions of Chinese history. Though the scholars of ethics claimed to be Confucianists, however, the generally hostile attitude towards women was quite different from that advocated by Confucianism in earlier ages. [5] (a.9 1986: 129 - 135)

Confucius in fact advocated that "the desire for food and sex is human nature", but the school of rationalism, on the other hand, proposed "the suppression of human desires for the *tao* (way) of heaven", and emphasised its core theme of "to die of hunger is nothing, but the loss of one's chastity is of the gravest concern". The scholars of the school became severe moralists. Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130 - 1200 A.D.), one of the greatest masters, was the school's fourth leader and the person who brought the notion of chastity to its first peak, and changed a notion of the second virginity to a biological virgin. As a result of his influence, the social morals that had earlier accepted previously-married women and were concerned only with their chastity after their marriage were changed to concentrating all attention on their physiological virginity in their wedding (a.9 1986: 146). The examination of the blood of the virgin on the second morning became one of the most important parts of the marriage ceremony [6]. A new

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[5] The philosophies of early Confucianism were rich in human touches. For example, though Confucius did not discuss sex directly, there were more than twenty poems in The Book of Odes 詩經 (collected and edited by Confucius himself) which were criticised by moralists in the Sung dynasty as being obscene. However, Confucius concluded the collection with a simple statement that there was no dirty thought in all those three hundred poems. (a.30 1988: 143)

[6] Virginal blood was treated as the only evidence of a bride's virginity. According to the folk customs of southern China, for example, the mother of the bride had to give a white "handkerchief of chastity" 貞節帕 to her son-in-law on the day of weeding personally (a.8 1992: 31). If virginal blood was found on the second morning, the husband's family would send a present together with a card saying "The family upbringing is good, your lady is respectable" to her own parents to convey their joy and congratulations; the family of the bride would then show off, proudly, to all neighbours. But if the blood was not found, it would bring shame to

age of inhumanity towards women had begun.

The Sung dynasty, however, was merely the period for the formation and development of these ideas, and not yet the real heyday for that. The Ming dynasty was the era that valued female chastity most. The more a woman protected her chastity, the higher the honour she would be awarded. It was not only the woman herself who was praised openly, a stone arch would be built to honour her husband's family, and the family would be upgraded to a higher social position. The heads of the local government would go personally to present their respects and congratulations; and the woman's maidservants and servants would even be released as free people. More works of *nu-chiao* (female-education) 女教 were published and promoted within the interior court of each family. Meanwhile, the idea, that "an untalented women is a virtuous one" arose and had a great influence on thought and attitudes (a.9 1986: 188). The Instruction of Mother Wen 溫氏母訓 (the late Ming dynasty) advocated that "Women should not be educated or learn poetry, a few hundred of words related to daily living needs is enough; to learn more will be of no benefit, only harm." [7]

After vigorous efforts by the social authorities of the Ming dynasty to promote the notion of chastity, the guidelines became rigid and narrow, and were interpreted as strictly as those of a religion. For example, it was taken for granted that a young lady should mourn - and should preserve her virginity for - her dead fiancé, even though they had never met. Furthermore, the woman was expected to commit suicide as a show of her purity if a man flirted with her; she was also expected to marry any male stranger who saw her body, or to cut off the part of her own body where it was touched by a man who was an outsider, irrespective as to whether this was by accident or on purpose. Such a rule applied even to the female

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the bride's family, which had to unconditionally accept the return of the bride. As this was a great humiliation to the family of the bridegroom too, the truth sometimes would be covered up and the bride allowed to remain in husband's family. However, she would very possibly be badly treated, and even her original family would agree that it was what she deserved. (a.27 1986: 119)

[7] The associations were that most talented women in historical tales had sad ending, and that most prostitutes could play instruments and write poems. People believed that only lacking talent and learning little could save a woman from a destiny of misfortune.(a.9 1986: 192)

patient and a male doctor. In addition it was very difficult for a widow to remarry, because her lack of virginity was further tightly connected with the superstitious idea of jinx (a.9 1986: 177 - 183). Though the notion of virginity may relate to lineage filiation, the concentration on physiological virginity seemed more like the result of its being an abnormal sexual fixation of men (a.9 1986: 215 - 220). With the whole-hearted encouragement of royalty, chastity became the quickest route to elevation in society, and people were avid in their scrutiny of one another. Furthermore, foot-binding (cf. section 2-6.2) was evolving as a popular fashion, with the result that most Chinese women after the Ming era were not only partially or totally illiterate but semi-handicapped as well.

Though the scholars in the Ch'ing dynasty created no new ideas, simply re-organising previously published works (Just as textual research was emphasised in academic studies throughout the Ch'ing era, the traditional "female education" was greatly promoted throughout the Ch'ing), the traditional "female-education" was greatly promoted and kept in real heyday throughout the era of Ch'ing (a.9 1986: 275 - 282). And though the number of female poets in the Ch'ing dynasty was evidently greater than in any earlier dynasties, the so-called "literature of interior-room" was: (i) merely encouraged by the prosperous academic practices of the society, (ii) mostly focusing on the themes of the eagerness of love and the pains of lovesickness, (iii) still strongly despised and objected to by most Confucianists even they were not realised in public. Their being known as more "talented" females was totally nothing to do with their self-consciousness, or new recognition of female roles, or even the challenge of the idea of "no talent is virtue".

In short, the stereotype of gender in Chinese culture was fixed from the time Confucianism became accepted as the only orthodoxy, yet Confucianism itself had undergone radical change from a more gentle and humane system of learning to a form of inhuman and cold moralism. The role and rights of women were almost totally suppressed after the Sung dynasty, and low self-expectations lead to even women rationalising the prejudices against themselves and believing in them; they actively recognised these values and used them as the only standard of self-evaluation (a.7 1993: 18), so trapping their sex in a life of difficulty for the rest of Chinese history until

the early 20th century.

3-3 Traditional Chinese attitudes towards sex

It can be deduced from archaeological discoveries and what is shown in the myth of genesis that genital symbolism and the worship of reproduction must have existed in ancient Chinese culture [8] (g.2 1960: 1 - 38). "The annual worship of *kao-mei*" 高禖之祀 (the official worship of the genital) and "the meeting of mid-spring" 中春之會 recorded by the ancient classics [9] also showed how the necessity of sex was embraced by the social system, and infiltrated the lives of the ancient Chinese. Furthermore, the idea that compared the sexual relationship between men and women to the combination of heaven and earth was apparent in many works during the Han dynasty. For example "...all things are peaceful when heaven and earth are in harmony; all things will be created when the male has intercourse with the female..." (Yi-ching 易經), "...to marry women is a necessary aspect of nature; if there is no communication between heaven and earth, there will be no flourish..." (Yi-ching), "...there is nothing as natural as the relationship between men and women..." (Pai-hu-t'ung) etc. This suggests that the linking of human beings and cosmos through sexual imagery must have originated from very early times, and had been clearly formulated before the time of the Han dynasty.

A highly active interest was taken in sexual matters. For example, during an important national conference on politics and education presided over by the Emperor himself in the Eastern Han dynasty, there was even serious discussion about the number of times sexual intercourse should take place with a concubine who was under fifty years of age (a.29 1990: 46).

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[8] Lots of pottery figures of naked and pregnant women with exaggerated breasts, arms and sexual organs were discovered in northern China; concrete and abstract models of male genitalia were found in the drainage basin of the Chu river 珠江, and cave paintings depicting sexual intercourse were found in Inner Mongolia.(a.29 1990: 32)

[9] According to The Decorum of Chou 周禮, the official of matchmaking recorded the information of all young people, and held an annual "blind-date" in every spring to guarantee high numbers of marriages.(a.29 1990: 33)

There was also a specific discussion on the *p'i-yung* 辟雍 [10], where sex education formed an important part of the curriculum. These points illustrate the great importance which was attached to sexual knowledge and how this was acknowledged, among the noble class at least.

Furthermore, *fang-chung-shu* 房中術 (the technique of the inner room), an old complex knowledge of Chinese sexology, evolved in that period. *Fang-chung-shu* is said to have originated in the early Q'in dynasty [11], but the name was used formally for the first time in The Han History by Pan Ku 班固 in the Han dynasty (a.30 1988: 57), and its theoretical structure is believed to have been fully established in the later eras of the South and North dynasty 南北朝 (a.30 1988: 76).

The teachings of *fang-chung-shu* did not place a great deal of emphasis on the theory of sex, nor on knowledge of the sexual organs themselves (in fact the teachings are frequently vague on biological detail and in some cases in actual error). Yet they were very progressive in respect of both the skills of sexual intercourse and the medical study of sexual physiology, and achieved success in scientific experiments in these fields (a.29 1990: 50). This may have resulted from the fact that *fang-chung-shu* was at first treated only as one of the means of achieving immortality. One of the proofs was that Peng Tsu 彭祖, a long-life legend who lived more than 800 years old, was "borrowed" from the legend to be an honourable master and prophet of the *fang-chung-shu* (a.30 1988: 74).

The argument of *fang-chung-shu* that sex could maintain life and health was based on the theory of "absorbing *yin* for nourishing *yang*". This theory also advocated: (i) sex should not be restricted - "There is no sad ending as a result of the *tao* (way) of the combination of heaven and earth; but there will be a predictable wound if human beings have no sexual

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10 The children of the noble families started their education at the boarding school in town at the age of ten, then transferred to *P'i-yung* in the suburbs when they were fifteen, and finished when they were regarded as adult at twenty. (a.30 1988: 21 - 23)

11 The *fang-chung-shu* may have originated from very early Yang-sheng-fang 養生方 (the method of life's cultivation); works relating to this, discovered at archaeological site C of No. 3, the grave of King Ma 馬王堆 at Ch'ang-sha 長沙, were estimated to have been completed in about 306 - 168 B.C. (a.29 1990: 53)

intercourse"; and (ii) sexual life should be harmonious - the *tao* of sexual intercourse is nothing but ease and peace. However, all these ideas were suggested only for the purposes of a long and healthy life, and one was not encouraged to abandon oneself to carnal desire. (a.29 1990: 54)

Fang-chung-shu maintained very close links with Taoism [12] after its inception, not only further developing under its wing, but also becoming the most important advertisement for Taoism (a.30 1988: 63). In time, however, Taoism's ceremonies of worship, charm and alchemy, led to it being strongly associated with the mysteries of witchcraft. From an early stage *fang-chung-shu*, too, acquired an image as a secret, evil and mysterious art of the occult. Regardless of its legitimacy in either theoretical or scientific terms, *ts'ai-pu-shu* (the occult art of absorption-nutrition) 採補術 [13] was taken seriously as a moral argument for treating the female body as a tool for nurturing man's life (though the technique, theoretically, was suited to both sexes, in practice it placed much more emphasis on the satisfaction of men). Since its practice was against both secular ethics and social decorum, it evoked strong criticism from moralists and from the reformers of Taoism themselves, but as most of the heads of each branch were also experts of *fang-chung-shu*, and the reformation was solely for a better image of Taoism, *fang-chung-shu* was never really eliminated from Taoism, but was simply practised with greater caution and largely in secret (a.30 1988: 62).

Fang-chung-shu was greatly welcomed by the noble and ruling classes (mainly in southern China where the influence of Taoism was strong - c.4 1989: 143) until the time of the Tang dynasty (a.30 1988: 76). It not only perfectly matched their demands of treasuring life, but also gave them an

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12 There were two different Taoism in China: the learning which had arisen in the Chou dynasty and declined after Confucianism was honoured as the only royal school in the Han dynasty; and the religion which originated in ancient popular beliefs, and gradually was systematised by the Taoists after the Southern dynasty (c.4 1989: 57). In the beginning some theories and the names of initiators of the latter were borrowed from the former, but they evolved totally differently in the later development. The Taoism mentioned in this thesis is the later.

13 This idea was theorised and highlighted in The Pao-pu-tzu 抱朴子 (A.D. 317) by Ke Hung 葛洪 (283 - 363 A.D.), and became one of the most important ideas put forward by Taoism. (a.30 1988: 74)

excuse for random sexual behaviour [14]. In brief, though the Book of Rites 禮記 appeared at a very early date, the Chinese attitude towards sex was positive and active, at least with respect to the upper classes of society, and was not the subject of serious ethical criticism before the time of the Sung dynasty.

Following the rise of rationalism in the Sung dynasty, however, positive attitudes towards sex were completely reversed and "to yield all human desire to the *tao* of heaven" became the only standard for all values. The new moralists totally changed the relationship between genders within the space of a hundred year. Ideas and attitude towards sex which had lasted for centuries were now totally transformed, traditional attitudes being seen as dirty and false and cause for reprimand.

The concept of a "good" woman was completely separated from any connection with sex; *fang-chung-shu* vanished completely and mysteriously from the public arena [15], and the people were locked into a new orthodoxy of strict morality. From that time on, sex became characterised by mystery and ignorance, by admonishment and taboo while *fang-chung-shu* was almost totally forgotten except for the images of its erotic aspect. During the time of the Ming and the Ch'ing, it was more seriously misunderstood as only an evil and erotic art of the occult, and became a synonym for the erotic, the immoral, the evil, and the mysterious.

Reflecting an old saying which went: "all people have morality on their tongues in public, but men are like robbers and women are like

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14 It encouraged men to have intercourse with as many different women as possible, as it argued that "a man who always makes love with the same woman will render *yin* weak and do no further benefit to him", and "the emperor Huang 黃帝 became a genius after he had sexual intercourse with one thousand two hundred women"; it even gave instructions about female bodies and sexual organs, and which could do more benefit or damage to men through intercourse. (a.30 1988: 88 - 93)

15 Tan-pa-yasu-yori 丹波康賴 (Japanese) came to China in the Northern Sung dynasty in about 984 A.D. He collected the Su-nu-ching 素女經 (the book of female nature), the Tung-hsuan-tzu 洞玄子 and the Yu-fang-mi-chueh 玉房秘訣 (the knack in bedroom) and many others concerning *fang-chung-shu*, and re-edited as the I-hsing-fang 醫心方; but it also had disappeared from the public eye for nine hundred years in Japan in later time. *Fang-chung-shui* re-appeared in China after 1854 when it was recovered and reorganised by Yeh Te-hui 葉德輝 (a.29 1990: 82).

prostitutes inside", two significant features became apparent in society during this period: (a.29 1990: 84 - 99)

(i) The prosperity and speed of growth of underground erotic literature, which exactly paralleled the promotion of ethical education. This may have been a result of overwhelming social and sexual repression which had the effect of reducing true obedience. Erotic literature, which is a typical expression of voyeuristic fantasy to most people in a society of sexual repression (a.29 1990: 91), was cheaper, safer, more convenient, and a more discreet method of "self-expression" than prostitution.

(ii) The growth of erotic literature accompanied a large degree of misunderstanding about ancient Chinese sexology. It is very clearly suggested that erotic literature adopted only the sections on sexual skills from *fang-chung-shu*, associating the female body only with sensual fantasy and not with any spiritual element (a.22 1989: 17). Truth was distorted, and the notions of *ch'i-kung* (the exercise of air) 氣功 and all other serious theories concerning health or long life were no longer of interest to most people.

In summary, the Chinese attitudes towards sex can be divided into two aspects:

(a) The sexual connection with the philosophy of cosmos and the human being - this concept led the Chinese to believe that sex had a supernatural connection with everything in nature, and was dominated by the power of nature. This meant that the relationship between man and woman should be as harmonious as that between heaven and earth, *yang* and *yin*, and led in time to the development of *fang-chung-shu*. However, this sexual attitude was distorted following suppression by the school of rationalism.

(b) Sex as taboo, a real attitude in daily lives after the Sung dynasty. Taboos about sex and anything related to it resulted from ignorance due to a lack of proper education and positive attitudes. Sex, that beyond the purpose of reproducing descendants, was regarded as unclean, immoral, dishonourable, mysterious and shameful; it was only for prostitutes or lewd women, something an honourable person should always avoid. Sexual desire, that concerning female chastity and directly effecting male filiation, could thus even be the most serious sin for a "good" woman in the Chinese

morality [16].

This meant that, during the years of the Ming and the Ch'ing in particular, general sexual suppression and ignorance throughout society and commonly dominated the Chinese in most traditional families.

3-4 Homosexuality, a uniquely male phenomenon

Before discussing the topic of homosexuality, we must understand that the reason why reference is not made to lesbianism is because the woman's right to even a normal sexual relationship (not for the purpose of reproduction) between herself and her husband - still less an "abnormal relationship" - was denied by ethical codes and by the limited space within an honourable family. Intercourse beyond the functional purpose of perpetuating the lineage was strictly the monopoly of men.

In the case of male homosexuality, Chinese philosophy tended to identify things in terms of their relative roles. An attitude that tolerates, allows or acknowledges that the differences can co-exist is the essence of Chinese dualism. That may be why homosexuality in Chinese society was never really criticised as perversion, though it was never really encouraged either.

Homosexuality had been recorded in royal history books for centuries, and it seems that it was treated almost as a kind of refined hobby in olden times [17]. This common practice was suppressed (or at least there were very few formal records of it) in the Sung dynasty because of rationalism, but re-appeared after the Ming dynasty because of the

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16 This concern was clearly suggested by the popular classic novel of Pao-kung's Verdicts (龍圖公案- of which many editions were published during the Ming and Ch'ing period). There were 46 cases directly concerning improper female sex in all 100 cases collected in the book, 36 concerning male greed, and only 18 others. (a.22 1987: 76) - Pao-kung, an official of the Sung dynasty, was respected as the most upright and honest judge by the Chinese, people even believed that he could redress the miscarriage of justice for innocent ghosts.

17 According to Shi-chi 史記, many men were appointed as Court officers because of their "beautiful" appearance and having homosexual relationships with emperors before the Han dynasty; and all ten emperors of the Western Han also had genuine leanings or at least tendencies towards homosexuality. (a.34 1993: 236)

rejection of sexual oppression. Professional hustlers, called *hsiang-kung* 相公, even appeared in the Ch'ing dynasty. (a.34 1993: 241)

Homosexuality was widely depicted in many classic novels and erotic fiction after the Ming dynasty, though the literary characters were clearly described as being not only homosexual but also heterosexual. This included the people who were mentioned in official records. The characters referred to the Shi-chi, for example, were never claimed to be solely homosexual. Such ideas could be said to concur with the words of Pai Hsing-chien 白行簡 (776 - 826 A.D.) in the Tang dynasty that "it is not enough for a man to only have sex with women, it is also human for a man to have sex with another men". (a.23, 1986: 242)

Though homosexuality was never formally accepted, it was never singled out for severe criticism either. If the Chinese were sometimes against homosexuality this was not because it was viewed differently from heterosexuality, but because sex itself was seen as immoral. The reasons for this could be as follows:

(a) The Chinese understood sex as consisting of two parts. The first part was related to the function of reproduction, concerned only with the lineage system. Protecting and preserving this function was a common responsibility of both sexes, Beyond this, a husband had no obligation to satisfy his wife's further sexual demands. The second part was as sexual pleasure outside the lineage system; all women except those in the family were treated merely as sex objects. The logic, therefore, was that if a man had done his duty for his lineage, he would not be blamed or criticised for any other sexual activities outside the lineage. That was why characters in popular literature did not need to be portrayed as exclusively homosexual.

(b) According to psychological theories, gender identity can result from one's upbringing as well as one's physiological make-up. Therefore, homosexuality may develop when a boy is in a situation that allows close contact with the same gender, especially when the behaviour is encouraged by the suggestion of increasing sense of safety and mental pleasure (a.34 1993: 129 -131). The traditional Chinese lineage's emphasis on sexual oppression and the separation of the genders, together with an authoritative and strict traditional home education provided a very big stimulus to boys cultivating homosexual leanings. It can thus be argued that it

was a predictable by-product of the Chinese lineage values and a potentially enlightening influence in the interior court.

(c) In such a male-dominated society, the friendship and loyalty between male friends and sworn-brothers were highly regarded. In addition, the literature suggested that women, no matter good or bad, were potential trouble and disaster to men (a.24 1983: 107). Those greatly encouraged men to develop obscure fancies about their own gender.

There exist no direct records or investigations relating to homosexuality in Taiwan during the immigration period. However, some verdicts of the courts during the time of 18th and 19th centuries, showed evidence of complicated homosexual relationships in some cases (a.28 1990:114 - 120). Also, given the difficulties presented by the environment, by harsh labour conditions and, most particularly, by the imbalance between the sexes in the immigrant society, it would be reasonable to assume that homosexuality was both practised and tacitly accepted at that time.

3-5 The taboo of "uncleanness", a form of sexism exclusive to women

"Uncleanness" may be one of the most significant and widely acknowledged taboos in the ancient societies. As argued by Mary Douglas in her study about "purity and danger" (d.40 1966), it could be seen very differently in different societies, and the relationship between unclean people and the polluted people could be interactive and relative, and especially it could be applied to both sexes equally on most occasions. But to the Chinese, the "uncleanness" and its pollution roles, unlike the cases that Douglas cited, seems to be much more "absolutely" attach to only women than "relatively" attach to both sexes who were concerned in traditional society. The woman who had her sexual organ without hair, for example, was known as *pai-hu* (white tiger) - the sign of jinx, on the contrary the man with hairless sexual organ was known as *ch'ing-lung* (blue dragon) - the sign of noble birth (a.28 1991: 88), and men (excluding the dead) had never been the source of uncleanness and would never be polluted by other men who had been polluted.

In traditional Chinese society, the "uncleanness" must come from the "object" that blasphemed the gods and became a powerful obstacle between gods and human being (Emily Ahern - g.4 1982: 473), and caused damage to a being's fortune or even its life directly or indirectly. Therefore any object or substance that was out of its normal or intended function, place or form could be treated as uncleanness and causing pollution by the Chinese. This applied to menstrual blood as opposed to the "good blood" in blood vessels or to a corpse as opposed to a living being, etc. (h.30 1983: 7)

As the origin of the belief of "uncleanness" itself allows several co-existent theories (d.40 1966), it is hard to be certain at what exact period the concept of "uncleanness" arose in Chinese values, but it may be reasonable to assume that it should have its origins along with the first ideas about gender inequality, gradually becoming more and more complex and ritualistic as it became influenced by social values. "Uncleanness" became a strict taboo to the Chinese because it was supposed not only to influence the safety of women from whom the unclean product derived, but more important was that it polluted "innocent" men and threatened their lives.

Indicated by the Chinese folk customs, menstrual blood was treated as the absolutely unclean substance and the most powerful evil in the human world, so much so that it would not only obstruct the communication between beings and gods, but also overcome unclean ghosts. During her menstrual period and for a certain period after giving birth the woman was, therefore, the main source of "uncleanness" [18]. Though the "filth" of excretion was at the same time associated with the powers of suppressing ghosts, this had more to do with its physical character of dirtiness than its cultural meaning of "uncleanness". Apart from the woman herself, who could automatically release herself from her own menstrual "uncleanness", other people could only be "re-cleansed" by a religious ritual of cancellation after he or she had been polluted (d.40 1966: 136).

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18 As the Chinese believed that the baby was made from the useful blood of the mother, the blood discharged from the woman in giving birth was thought to be unnecessary and useless. Because of its strong connection with the magic power of giving life, this blood was thought to be a threat to the safety of the baby and all people who were in the room or had touched the blood. (g.4 1982: 468)

The above description suggests that the Chinese belief in "uncleanness" should relate only to menstrual blood and not to women themselves. The taboo of "uncleanness" in the birth process should only concern the baby because of its direct soaking in the menstrual blood; the delivery room because it was polluted by that blood; the surrounding people because of their being in that polluted place or touching the polluted baby or objects in that place; and finally the woman herself because of her discharge of menstrual blood in that period, but not because of her role as a woman or a mother. This idea could also be seen in the light of folk religion. In these terms a young lady who was not mature enough to have periods was accepted as a spirit medium with god because her cleanness was acknowledged as equivalent to the purity of young men (g.3 1986: 517). However, as women were seen as the only source of "uncleanness" in the human world, and the only sex to having the potential to endanger life, "uncleanness" came to refer to women themselves, and became a label attached directly to the role of woman. This showed in the example that "the unclean period would last for four months when a female baby was given birth, but only one month for male baby's birth" (g.4 1982: 477). Another association linking women with the idea of "uncleanness" was that both women and ghosts belonged to *yin*, this led the Chinese to believe that women were more easily contacted by ghosts and therefore to became unclean. It also is one of the reasons why spirit mediums were much more often women than men (g.3 1986: 515).

As a result, anything associated with their sex and sexual intercourse, such as their underwear or the strip of cloth for foot-binding, would be considered unclean. Women were not only forbidden to take a bath in front of a stove, but also to sit on or lean against the stove; even a basket of their clothing should not touch it, in order to avoid offending the god of the stove (g.4 1982:473). Almost all occupations had strict rules for avoiding contact with women. For instance, women were not allowed to touch or step over men's work tools, and it was absolutely forbidden for a woman to board a fishing boat. Furthermore, Taiwan's merchants even believed that they would have no luck in deals for that whole day if the first person they met in the early morning was a woman (c.1 1989: 140 - 148). And though the belief of "uncleanness" did not correspond closely to moral rules, the role of widows, too, were strongly associated with the source of "uncleanness"

after the Sung dynasty, because their husbands' death was usually believed to be directly connected to their evil powers rooted in their unclean way of life (c.1 1989: 143). (This logic however was never used to explain the same situation of widowers)

Any unclean person (including women and "polluted men") was forbidden to worship because it would block the communication with the gods, and be blasphemous to them, therefore bestowing disaster on the household. For this religious reason, the male household-head was the only qualified and acknowledged officiant on worship in a family. Even when the worshipped god or goddess was more relevant to women the worship was conducted by the male household-head, and only a low godhead or temperate god, such as *ti-chi-chu* (the lord of the foundation) 地基主, *ch'uang-mu* (the goddess of the bed) 床母, and *t'ai-shen* (the god of the fetus) 胎神, etc., could be worshipped by women (cf. section 7-1). Even the most powerful female household-head would seldom dare to challenge this taboo.

As the dissemination of almost all taboos was essentially in the form of the very simple and doctrine-like words passed down by non-professionals, from generation to generation, the non-rational aspects were reinforced and exaggerated and the rational explanation suppressed (c.1 1989: 37). Yet when by avoiding it passively people averted a trouble or a disaster that it should supposedly have incurred, the taboo made people inert, and with the catalysis of cultural restraint, it became a folklore, sub-religion and even accepted truth. As the idea of the "unclean women" gradually replaced the idea of "unclean menstrual blood", women became overwhelmed by the relentless disdain, and even by their own fear. What originally concerned only a specific time (e.g. the period of menstruation), place (e.g. the delivery room) and subject (e.g. menstrual blood and the people polluted) took on a broader significance to include women themselves almost at any time and in any circumstances. The "taboo of uncleanness" therefore came to mean, to all intents and purposes, the "taboo of the unclean woman".

3-6 Summary

In ancient China, people treated the relationship of all pairs, including human beings, as equal, cycling, and as being in harmony. But the relationship between men and women became distorted after the "system of ceremonial forms" was established in the Chou dynasty, and Confucianism was designated as the only royal school in the Han dynasty. Under this system, men and women were pushed to two opposite poles representing domination and subjection, nobility and humility.

Human relationships were excluded from the natural laws of harmonious *yin-yang* philosophy, suggesting that the role of women was defined more by social and cultural factors than by their biological nature. The relative positions of men and women never really improved even for the immigrant Taiwanese during the time of unbalanced population.

Though the value system implicit in the idea of "the noble men and the humble women" developed as part of the emphasis placed on the lineage system, there had been a more flexible and forgiving attitude to women before the Sung dynasty. In particular, Confucianism tolerated *fang-chung-shu* because of the knowledge's great help in maintaining the lineage system. But the humane attitudes towards the sexes changed when the school of rationalism came to the fore in the Sung dynasty.

Whilst female chastity was ranked highest of all the virtues during the Sung dynasty, other female virtues such as virginity, foot-binding and "no-talent" were successfully promoted and developed. Rationalism led to strict and discriminatory moral code with the female position becoming more and more difficult. Under the comprehensive system of ethical education and with the whole-hearted encouragement of the social and government authorities combined with the female self-persuasion, the system of values designed by men solely for the benefit of men became the unchallenged truth. Even women themselves believed, superstitiously, in that truth, and tried their best to adhere to and martyr themselves to these standards at all times.

Fang-chung-shu vanished rapidly from the public arena and began

its development in secret after the Sung dynasty suggesting that normal sexual behaviour was being unreasonably suppressed and twisted. That led to a dichotomy between the way women were viewed in terms of sensual imagination, cultural roles, and philosophic concepts and the way they were treated in their everyday lives. Women in late Chinese history became the victims of dichotomy.

The way in which female talent was rigidly suppressed and de-valued in the male-centre society through the most Chinese history was a clear form of sexism. Women were not only excluded from all formal education, but also were prohibited from taking any national examination. Any of their achievements were unjustly undervalued as exceptional events of an abnormal minority. There were very few women of achievement recorded in Chines history. Amongst the few can be included Pan-chao (cf. section 3-2) in classic *nu-chiao*, Li Ch'in-chao 李清照 (the early Sung dynasty) in poetry, Tz'u-hsi 慈禧 (the late Ch'ing dynasty) in politics, and Wu-tse-t'ien 武則天 who even became an empress (the Ta-chou dynasty 大周, A.D. 625 - 705) etc. However, as "the hen does the duty of morning call" was known as the premonition of decay to the Chinese, the later two especially were believed and blamed as the essential cause of the dynasty's fall.

Among all these, it seemed that Chinese religions least restrained the independence of women, even though many branches of original Buddhism were full of suspicion of sexism (e.35 1987: 28 - 33), and early Taoism had strong connection with *fang-chung-shu*. It may be through Indian Buddhism's gradual transformation into "Chinese Buddhism" after it had been introduced into China, and both Buddhism and Taoism had been greatly influenced by Confucianism and infiltrated each other to become more and more "Confucian-ised" (c.4 1989: 289). Especially because of its stress on that which was beyond the secular world, Buddhism became one of the most important mental and physical refuges for most women in traditional Chinese society to escape from oppressions in most history after the Tang dynasty.

Positively the marriages in inferior categories were still strongly tied with traditional lineage values (this, for example, can be found in Chinese matrimonial ceremonies that had no difference to all social categories), but as the men in both superior and inferior classes could easily have sexual

relationships with the women in the inferior class for non-lineage purposes. Women in traditional Chinese society, in general, could therefore be classified into two stereotyped groups from androcentric visions:

(a) The "moral women", or "good women" as they used to be referred to, who had been defined according to male values since ancient times, and had never been altered. Based on the system of lineage, such a classification regarded women as a non-sexual subject only for the biological function of reproduction; there was thus no revealed love or passion between a husband and a wife.

(b) The "bad women", as who in the inferior category (cf. section 4-6.5, footnote 23) had less ethical ties and therefore were stereotypically supposed to have a lewd nature [19], and the "prostitute" in the broad definition were, on the other hand, very loosely associated with the values placed on the lineage and became the only potential source of real love and sexual pleasure for men outside the lineage system.

Viewing women as human beings, such notions appear contradictory and ambiguous; but whilst it is seen from the perspective of women as tools either for the function of reproduction or for sexual pleasure, for wealth and even for social climbing, the notions become clearer, and more understandable. The women in the traditional Chinese society therefore could be said to be treated much more like the accessory part of the male or the remaining part of the sole gender in the society rather then even only the recognisable category of the second sex in the human world.

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[19] A woman who dared to express her feeling and love to a man was known as "being less content with a woman's lot" and such behaviour would be seen as "lewdness" in traditional Chinese society.

Chapter 4

The cultural roles of sexes in the traditional Chinese family

In the traditional Chinese social order, no status attached to anyone who existed outside of a clearly-defined set of human relationships (d.3 1983:11). As a consequence, individuals tended to define themselves wherever possible as part of an introverted and limited family structure. In doing this they were forced into following the moral restrictions of a very closed society and identifying themselves with its codes and ethics. This made the Chinese show great loyalty to their particular family instead of paying attention to the abstract notions of country and nation. They admired huge family with numerous family members living together, and regarded these as the greatest achievement possible in life. Though such a value system was the very core of traditional Chinese life, it was associated with a very complicated framework filled with contradiction and conflict. A traditional Chinese family, especially a large one, was difficult to maintain, and was only possible with the strong support of a complex system of domestic economics, lineage ethics, social norms, and a powerful law, working together. This chapter explains the traditional Chinese family system and seeks to show particularly how women were treated within this complicated domestic network.

4-1 The structure of Chinese family

As Dr. Li Yi-yuan (Head of the faculty of Social Ciences, Ch'ing-hua University; Senior Researcher of the Academia Sinica, Taiwan) said:

> ...The Chinese could be treated as a creature of household, and the Chinese culture could be treated as a culture of family...the rule of family thus developed a value system of morality, it not only dominated the daily lives of all Chinese people, but it also infiltrated all other fields of Chinese values and created a unique composite culture of family...any person must belong to one certain family group...one would

> lose almost all the meaning and values of being a human being, and there would be no more place for a person in society, when he was divorced from the family system and became hard to position... (d.9 1988: 113 - 128)

The Chinese family system developed fundamentally from the concept of patriarchy - an internal structure linking one common identified male ancestor with all his male descendants and their spouses (as attached family). No matter how big the family was, all members had to be included within the system of communal living (it could be either physical or symbolic), and each person's position was decided only by reference to their specific relationship with the male household-head. And since only the male relationship of father-son was emphasised, the Chinese recognition of kinship only existed within the patrilineal relationship. All daughters and matrilineal relatives therefore would be treated as "outsiders" [1] (d.9 1988:116).

As the Chinese idea of immortality was built on continuing the line of descendants, the vertical structure of generations was therefore given greater emphasis than the horizontal structure of the family's numbers. Genealogical continuity became the most important aim of the traditional system of family and provided the whole meaning of life and ambition for the Chinese. This idea was expressed in concrete terms by the system of inheriting the surname, ancestral worship and filial duty. The *fang* 房, as a male heir was called, became the physical manifestation of these ideas.

In "Fang and the Chinese Lineage System" (h.12 1985 127 - 181), Dr. Ch'en Ch'i-nan (Vice Chairman of The Council of Cultural Planning and Development, Taiwan) defined *fang* as:

> ...the status of a son relative to his father, a male acquired that status from his father's family automatically once he was born, and did not lose it even after he was dead...since it was exclusively a father-son filiation, a woman could get the right of *fang* only from her husband in his family...the relationship of *fang* only existed between two generations, regardless of whether the father had been independent or not, and all members in patrilineal network had both the subject status of *fang* to upper generation, and the head and ancestor of the independent

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[1] That was why the Chinese had the taboo of incest; marriage with matrilineal cousins, that was built on the basis of original kinship and was believed to guarantee more domestic harmony, was not only allowed but also encouraged. (a.10 1987: 53 - 56)

> family to his next generation in the same time...the framework of each independent *fang* was expressed by a collective property with common meals served by one common kitchen, and one equal-shearing ancestral worship, etc...

As a *fang*s were in "co-partnership", one's status would directly influence the heirship of another. One's position in genealogy, especially the generation in vertical axis of descendant branch was very important. For distinction, the Chinese used to give one common character for the given name of all male descendants of the same generation as their "generational name".

As *fang* was not only seen as a physical duty and an obligation, but was also itself an important index of a family's prosperity, a man increased or produced *fang* by both the normal method of having concubines for generating more births, by the alternative of adopting a son from the clan [2], or by having his daughter marry a man into the family [3] when he died before he got married or had a son.

Since genealogical continuity was the priority of a family, the family's economic standing was seen only a means to ensure lasting and flourishing descendants. A father's role would be completely replaced by all his *fang*s, and his property would be totally divided in line with his family's separation during a certain life cycle. Therefore there was no unchanged unit of property, except the common property (mainly including the real estate and the interests and the yields from it) of ancestors - the symbol of filial connection (d.9 1988:132).

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2 It was a ritual *fang* transference (*kuo-fang*) 過房. The adopted son must come from the lower generation in the lineage, the son of one's own brother was therefore perfect. As it was a ritual adoption, the adopted son still lived with his own parents and changed nothing in his life except extra responsibilities and rights of *fang* inherited from the adopter (h.12 1985: 163 - 167).

3 It was a kind of genealogical uxorilocal marriage. Their first son would inherit the surname of the wife's family and be treated as the *fang* of her natal lineage. As it concerned the right and responsibility of the wife's and her husband's original lineage, it could only happen in a family that had only daughters, and while the odds of two concerned families was big. As it's strong ritual meaning, the husband succeed to nothing from his wife's lineage, he and his wife would not qualify to be the ancestors of that first son either. (h.12 1985: 155 - 157)

In short, the traditional Chinese lineage, to which form of social organisation all Chinese aspired, was built on two apparently contradictory logic: fission and fusion. These served to keep *fang*s separated for the purpose of horizontal expansion and prosperity but simultaneously to maintain unity by common ancestral worship in order to symbolise vertical spiritual continuity (h.12 1985: 177).

Solely from the viewpoint of male values, there were four distinct features which characterised the traditional Chinese family system (d.9 1988: 123 - 126):

1. Continuity -- To the Chinese, the ultimate purpose of life was to create a large number of male descendants so that the family would continue to thrive and be prosperous. This was neither for one's own immediate honour and wealth nor for the improvement of one's prospects in the next life. The belief that the responsibility of one's existence was not for oneself but for one's family led to a concealed and self-controlled nature, and the idea that everything should be done solely for one's family.

2. Tolerance -- Whilst being rigorously exclusive of outsiders, the attitudes towards a family member was warm, caring, passionate, generous, and protective. This led to a principle that all decision-making only concerned the relationships of people involved and not the matter itself. A decision therefore concerning different people over the same issue could possibly be resolved with contrasting results.

3. Authority -- The father figure in a family could neither be challenged nor doubted, and unconditional obedience of children towards their parents was demanded. The effect was to create a blind belief in authority and a passive acceptance of traditional values. This became an important factor to most Chinese.

4. Sexlessness -- The single-sex relationship of a father and each of his sons was the core of all relationships in a family (vertical link). Any other relationship (horizontal spread) was just an appendage serving this key relationship (d.30 1948: 42). Anything to do with women that could threaten the father-son relationship, therefore, had to be avoided. Reproduction was the only permitted function of sex in a family. Even intimacy between a young couple was inappropriate and its expression was forbidden.

4-2 Fatherhood and ownership

The Chinese lineage and family were based on the concept of the patriarch. The father was the sole head of the domestic groups of family; all other members in the family must under his absolute domination. As laws acknowledged only his domestic authority (d.6 1984: 7), and the lineage system accepted he as the only formal officiant of domestic ceremonies (d.6 1984: 22), his authorised ruling was legal, justifiable, sacred and beyond challenge.

According to the principles of lineage and filial duty, the status of fatherhood was gained naturally and had nothing to do with one's personality or ability. It was absolute and lasted till death. In other words, the father would still be the household-head in name even after the *fang*-separation. And as obedience to and recognition of fatherhood had to be strictly enforced in this authoritarian hierarchy, no members of the family were allowed to exhibit independence or free will even when they had grown up or had themselves achieved great status. (d.6 1984: 8). Any father trying to be democratic to his family would be treated as irresponsible, incapable or lazy (a.34 1993: 69). He therefore had to keep his distance from the family, controlling and instructing without explanation.

Since there was no discourse, only absolute obedience, no other family members would take responsibility for any of the actions or decisions of the father so the extent to which these brought achievements or crises to the family - and any glory or shame attached to any members of the family - reflected solely upon him. Members of the family relied on him completely in both material and mental respects making him, in effect, a king and a slave of the family at the same time.

The authority of fatherhood in the family was universally expressed in three specific ways:

(a) The absolute authority on the children's career and marriage - As only a marriage decided by the parents would be admitted by the law and the lineage system, the traditional Chinese marriage would go ahead only after it was agreed by the parents of both sides, and all rites had to be processed under their names the beginning to the end (d.6 1984: 129). It had

nothing to do with the will of the children concerned. Even any legal argument about the agreement of marriage would concern only the parents; the bride and bridegroom were just a silent audience to the whole affair (d.6 1984: 128). Such parental authority would last throughout a couple's married lives, and the wishes of the parents were absolute. As The Book of Rites 禮記 describes: "Though one loves his wife, he should divorce his wife if she does not please his parents; but though one does not love his wife, he should do his duty of husband because she can service his parents well and regarded fondly by them".

(b) The tacit legal right to sell one's family as goods - The law seldom denied the authority of the father to treat or sell any members of the family as a piece of valued property. A wife and children could be freely sold for any reason. In addition the father had an absolute right to buy and sell concubines and servants. (d.6 1984: 16). This concept of ownership had the support of the law of the dynasties of Ming and Ch'ing. One effect was that any wife found guilty of committing any offence other than adultery - no matter how serious the crime - could be sentenced to the custody of her husband, except for adultery [4] and where the death sentence was required. (d.6 1984: 135)

(c) The ambiguous right of killing children - Though the practice was not formally legalised after the Q'in dynasty when all legal authority was confined to the emperor, and although parents were held responsible for the crime of murdering their own children in the era of Tang (d.6 1984: 9), the practice of killing children was tacitly permitted. Parents who killed children who were deemed to have offended against them would be considered to have the right to do so and normally be found not guilty. In most cases parents could also request the government to execute the punishment for them. The government normally accepted all suits unconditionally without needing any proof, or conducting any form of investigation [5]. By and large, justice only considered the status of people concerned and not the reality

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4 As adultery would seriously affect the filiation and damage the lineage system, it was the most unforgivable sin and crime to the lineage and the law; the law, thus, was firmly against it so that the values of lineage could be maintained .(d.6 1984: 135)

5 The law only objectively cared if the victim was killed unreasonably, but the judgement would completely according to the subjective confession of the parents. Evidence or witnesses would not be needed, otherwise it could be seen as undermining the authority of fatherhood and denying its absoluteness. (d.6 1984: 15)

of the situation. So although the parents' right of killing their own children was notionally restricted by law, in practice, the freedom to kill was preserved and protected by the legal system which, in many cases, itself acted as the agent of execution. (d.6 1984: 11 - 15)

The life-long and unchallenged ownership of property within the family was the other distinct right relating to fatherhood. However economically independent might be other members of the family, they would be strictly forbidden to own private property by law and the lineage system (d.6 1984: 16) [6]. Laws also clearly prohibited any other family members from dealing in any property belonging to the family. Any deal relating of family property would be invalid legally unless the contract had the signature of the patriarch (d.6 1984: 16). This suggested that the domestic economics emphasised only unilateral subjection and returning in the bilateral relationship of gain-give between the father and all others.

In summary, the lineage was the basis of Chinese values, and the father was the sole acknowledged head of a family within a lineage. His absolute authority was unquestioned, enshrined in law and was life-long. Absolute respect, obedience, and filial piety were principles demanded of all members of the family towards the father. Any deviation from this position, for whatever reason would not be accepted by society, lineage or law. The laws in particular took a serious view of offences and extracted serious punishment for any behaviour which transgressed the norms. The law thus became the most important force which gave strength to the system and backed-up the authority of fatherhood (d.6 1984: 16).

However, a popular phenomenon in Taiwan was one in which parents would give away all their authority and property to *fang*s when they were still alive, and thus expose themselves to possible maltreatment from their daughters-in-law who were supposed, in return to make provision for them. This clearly suggests that fatherhood was merely a part of a generational transition, and a father's being a symbolic representative of the household was more important than to be an owner in meaning, even

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6 The wife was even denied the right to manage her own trousseau, and she was not allowed to take it with her when she was divorced. (a.7 1993: 41)

though the latter was decisively powerful in everyday life. When the sacred duty of being a *fang* was completed, all that remained was just to prepare to be an honourable ancestor. (h.9 1985: 102)

4-3 Fang-separation

Fang-separation (*fen-fang*) was a particular idea relating to the prosperity of a lineage evolved by the Han people. It was a recognition that "all sons, coming from the same father, should be completely divided and become a new independent branch in genealogical terms". Therefore, though all brothers would belong to the same *fang* of the father, and had the similar relationship of heirship, they were all individual and vertically exclusive, and would not be recognised as having one common father-son connection. (h.12 1985: 132)

The right of *fang* was absolute and was endowed automatically from the day of a man's birth. It was not dependent upon the will of the father which was why the Taiwanese called the *fen-fang* as *zhao-fang-fen* (according to *fang*-share) 照房份[7]. Since the rule was based on the idea of an equal share for all male heirs, it was clearly expressed in the division of family property, the distributions of benefit from ancestral estates, in the duty of providing for parents, and in the shared duty of managing common ancestral estates, etc. Therefore, the strict rule of *fang-share* not only distributed duties and benefits clearly and fairly, but also functionally clarified and re-enforced the genealogical relationships.

Theoretically, the household-head owned all the property of the family. However, according to the notion of *fen-fang*, a household-head could be more like simply a representative of his family. His freedom to make decisions relating to the property was actually limited and was controlled by the conditions of the lineage system and the rule of *fang*. In practice he was more like an estate owner/manger in name (h.12 1985: 146). In effect "a

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[7] According to the principle of *fang*, all brothers were positioned according to their order of birth, sons who were born to concubines theoretically would have no difference of status and rights from their brothers who were born by the wife. (h.12 1985: 133)

household-head had only absolute authority of property management and benefit distributions rather than absolute right of transferring estate". This was why a father, according to the custom, could, with authority, distribute profits to persons who did not enjoy the status of *fang* (e.g. daughters, sons-in-law, servants and relatives), or allow them to enjoyed the benefits of the family according to their contribution (h.12 1985: 147), but this must not include any real estate. This rule could also be clearly seen in the daughter's trousseau which usually included movable property but no land as such (h.12 1985: 152). The *fang* was the only acknowledged status that owned the right of family real estate, and the father's free will about distribution of property would be absolute only when it did not go against the rule [8].

As a father would lose all authority of management after the family property was divided and transferred to each *fang*. It meant that the property was not entirely under the father's complete ownership and control, it would then be under each *fang*'s complete domination; a father and his sons could never own the common property as share holders (h.12 1985: 143). As both the lineage system and the law regulated that a father was not allowed to dispossess the right of heirship nor the equal share of *fang*, *fen-fang* was not influenced by the father's favouritism or his direct will. It was not connected with the father's death [9] (h.12 1985: 145). Since a huge household was still admired by most Chinese, the separation, however, was very seldom really welcomed by a household-head. Most of the separations were actually forced to go ahead early for one or more of a series of practical reasons:

(a) As each *fang* was an individual and independent unit to his father, and as their equal share of heirship had nothing to do with their contribution or the extent of co-operation, the relationship between *fang*s, based as it was on a compulsory co-residence before separation, did not make for harmonious interactions. Any co-operation between brothers was,

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8 Since land was treated as the most important natural resource, and currency value was never really replaced it in traditional agricultural society, land was always the main part of the fortune calculation in the Chinese value system. (h.62 1972: 291)

9 Since the Tang dynasty, laws regulated that *fen-fang* must not be held when a father was still alive, or in his funeral period at least, because of the consideration of filial duty, but there was a proviso that the separation was allowed under the father's agreement. (d.6 1984: 16)

theoretically, based on mere the vertical relationships of father-to-son, and not the horizontal relationship between brothers.

(b) Though all brothers were equally qualified in genealogical terms, the heirs of different filiations still had very different domestic positions and "social conditions" in reality (d.38 1991: 244), so rivalry, suspicion and jealousy were hard to avoid in such a closed domestic structure.

(c) As each family allowed only one female household-head, other women normally tended to suffer from oppression, exploitation and slavery under that domestic authority. Women thus struggled to become the female household-head of her own *fang* as soon as possible. This commonly motivated them to speed up the *fen-fang* behind the scenes.

(d) In a family with lots of women, the domestic peace between the wife and concubines, the mother and all daughters-in-law, and sisters-in-law themselves, was difficult to maintain, A conditional division would usually be taken place for the sake of temporary peace, and led to earlier rather than the regular time for "normal" *fen-fang*.

As *fen-fang* was still a strong genealogical idea for the Chinese, so even though each *fang* separated from the patrifocal group to become a new independent unit, and completely replaced the original social units of property and family, the original lineage of the father would still exist at the core of the abstract value structure. This was shown, for example, by his tablet being worshipped in the new ancestral hall. In other words, though most common property no longer existed, and the original family had vanished, it was, conceptually at least, treated as only a property separation and not as the destruction of the family. In any event, a Chinese family was destined, from the very beginning, to be divided into pieces and replaced completely according to this genealogical concept. To the Chinese, who attached so much importance to prosperity and continuity of lineage, it could be the most efficient mean of propagation biologically, and the most successful model of cultural flowering.

4-4 The dual relationship of outsider and the family

Due to the serious considerations of rights and obligations of family, and the importance of filiation to the family, the distinction between family

members and outsiders, and distinction between sexes became the complex foundation of all Chinese social relationships. In order of priority, the distinction between family members and outsiders would be more significant than gender distinction within the family.

Briefly, for the Chinese, human relationships should be a kind of framework of concentric circles, as Professor Fei Hsiao-t'ung argued: "...It is the structure of distinctive order 差序格局 - a network of relationships with oneself as a centre, and each relative role positioned in an out-spreading wave...the nearer a person to interior field, the closer his relation to the central person...all people would be differently treated according to their relative place in the structure..." (d.30 1948: 22 - 30). Chinese society therefore was composed of countless individual networks, and each network had a unique centre and individual factors. A different morality had to take account of each specific network in each particular occasion. Thus the Chinese systems of morality and justice had no common standard, they had to be adjusted according to the relationships of the people concerned (d.30 1948: 37).

As any social relationship had to be clearly defined by the relative position of the individuals within this human "magnetic-field", there was therefore no procedure or mechanism for treating or responding to strangers and their affairs. All people had to be pseudo-kin-tied (relating one as a "family" - Hsu Lang-kuang, 1953 - h. 17 1992: 86) before they could be positioned within any form of relationship and their affairs addressed. Therefore, though the absolute genealogical family was clearly and strictly identified [10], the relative cultural definition of "family" could be flexible for the Chinese. Three systems of classification existed in addition to the concrete genealogical relationships in the lineage structure: (i) the formal and documentary name to the close relatives, (ii) the oral and intimate address of kinsfolk to the further relatives, and (iii) the oral and hospitable address of kinsfolk for the outsiders (h.47 1982: 63). In order to protect the lineage's advantage, initial priority was always given to defining any person

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10 According to the name of kinsfolk in genealogical system, there are thirty four clear and different classifications of kinsfolk relative to the male household-head, all names of non-patrilineal kinsfolk that were marked (marking theory - Greenberg, 1966) showed that the relative position was emphasised in the structure of distinction. (h. 47 1982: 49)

either as a member of the family who would be welcomed unconditionally by the lineage, or as an outsider who would be absolutely rejected by the lineage.

Women, who were disparagingly referred to as "the three *ku*s (nuns) and six *po*s (nannies)" 三姑六婆 [11], were destined to play an ambiguous role in what might be described as the grey zone between the family and the outsiders. As female family members were strictly caged within the interior court; information about the outside world was normally only available through the medium of male family members (a.11 1993: 71). The only other source of information therefore, was commonly provided by the roles of three *ku*s and six *po*s. Many of a female's confidential needs, especially secret professional services relating to immoral purposes such as abortion had to be satisfied informally and in secret. The roles of three *ku*s and six *po*s thus became welcomed by female family members.

Since, however, most of them came from an inferior social level, normally both their grasp of morality and knowledge were weak (a.24 1983: 191); it was easy for them to make up false information, to cheat, to encourage immoral behaviour, or even to blackmail their client for their own benefit. This made them potential brokers of all female immoral affairs [12], and one of the most serious potential threats to the values of lineage.

All in all, there was no position for strangers within the Chinese value system. A stranger was absolutely unwelcome in one's house. "Outsiders" as relatives were only allowed in certain areas of the house, and "outsiders" as daughters were even expelled from almost all family rights and obligations. The Chinese understanding of kinsfolk, except the rigid genealogical relationship, was flexible for different people on different occasions but only after one's status was certain was the door of convenience opened.

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[11] The three *ku*s were nuns of Buddhism 尼姑, Taoism 道姑 and Divination 卦姑. The six *po*s were: Ya-p'o 牙婆 (official matchmaker, and legal broker of people dealing of maids and concubines); Ch'ien-p'o 虔婆 (procuress); Mei-p'o 媒婆 (civil matchmaker); Yao-p'o 藥婆 (medicine woman who usually sold herbal medicines); Shih-p'o 師婆 (witch); Wen-p'o 穩婆 (midwife who was also in charge of examining the body of female criminal and female corpses). (a.24 1983: 187 - 191)

[12] In Chinese classic novels, there were almost no immoral love affairs which happened without the brokerage and assistance of the roles of three *ku*s and six *po*s behind the scenes.

4-5 The boundaries of gender in a family

Since no-one could genuinely experience life from the perspective of both sexes, one sex's understanding about the other sex was normally unavoidably stereotyped, indirect, and culturally induced. In order to establish an intimate social relationships it is necessary to try and fully understand each other and to seek compatibility. Yet the differences of cultural roles and the labour division by gender unfortunately obstructed all communication between two sexes within a traditional Chinese family, and thus intimate relationships were impossible. Such separation of the sexes was thought necessary because filiation was the core value of lineage, the female chastity was the only promise of filiation, and gender separation was the last guarantee of that chastity. Whilst the distinction of "the family and outsiders" was the key to open up all possible developments for people with uncertain social relationships, the "boundary of gender" was the lock to close down most potentiality for two sexes within certain relationships.

Except in the case of filiation, the fact that a clear boundary had always to be drawn between two sexes in all circumstances could be understood as: (a) The prejudice about sexes - women should not in any respect be similar to men. The distinction meant that the sexes were not necessary to be together in the course of their daily lives (a.24 1983:122). (b) The value of female virginity - it affected not only the price of women themselves in marriage, but also the honour of the whole family all the time. (c) The gender stereotype - as it was argued by Confucius that "...only women and mean men are difficult to be cultivated...", the Chinese believed that women were born with a character flaw, they were not only a potential source of all domestic crises and conflicts, but also the potential cause of men's failure or even death [13] (a.24 1983: 106 - 108). And, (d) The taboo of "uncleanness" - men had to keep away because women were a source of jinx which threatened men's life and destroyed their careers.

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[13] In Chinese classic novels, both good and bad women were the cause (remote or direct) of men's downfalls, therefore most of the heroic characters in novels were absolutely masculine, spotless, anti-libidinous, and even misogynistic (a.24 1983: 107)

Since the Chinese family was built on a framework of single-sex relationships between father and sons, any relationship between brothers, mother and daughters-in-law, wife and concubines etc., and especially relationships between different sexes, would be treated as part of a subsidiary structure. Such relationships could be neglected and generally discouraged. The first priority attached to the identification of each person's strict gender role for domestic discipline. Any confidential favour-giving was absolutely prohibited by the rule of gender separation, and even the relationships between a married couple were expected to be passionless and less emotional (d.9 1988: 125). Such separation was not only achieved by physical architecture, but was aided by an imperceptible ethical mentality. Disregarding sexes resulted in the traditional Chinese lineage becoming sexless.

The principle of the division of cultural duty such that "men do not talk about the interior and women do not talk about the exterior", led to most domestic space becoming the domain of female members of family, and to their becoming the leading players in practical family living.

4-6 Female roles in a family

As Mary Douglas said "...women have remained both signs and values..." (1966 - a. 57 1993: 41). Though women had almost the whole domestic space as their stage, they were just the second sex in a family, or more precisely just a residual part of the "only" sex in the traditional Chinese family. Whilst the status of men was gained by nature and their position protected by the lineage system and law, woman's role and position in a family would be completely decided by the person to whom she was related (e.g. the father before marriage, the husband after marriage, and the son after a husband's death). "...[Women] were not only objects, they had to agree to behave as objects..." (a.57 1993: 41). However, though their culturally-defined role might be clear, their real position in the domestic structure could be dramatically different.

4-6.1 **Mother and motherhood**

In traditional Chinese society, it seemed that a "mother" (*mu*) was much more regarded as a general cultural figurehead rather than a separate individual. This role, that mainly benefited from the primary filial duty of the Chinese, was seen as sexless, therefore it was absolutely free from other acknowledged female attributes such as being erotic, dangerous, unclean, and having the power to erode men's soul and health.

Motherhood came from the fatherhood, it was seen rather as a cultural product than a natural biological effect since one could gain this state because she was a wife of a father, and not necessarily because she was a mother of her children (d.6 1984: 17). It thus was not gained by nature (being cultural rather than being biological), nor was unchangeable (unilaterally authorised by the husband) because of its characteristics of attachment. Motherhood, always defined by reference to fatherhood, was therefore neither absolute nor prior (d.6 1984: 17). The law and the lineage only allowed her to take decisions authorised by her husband. Any decision beyond those relating to ordinary domestic affairs, which did not carry the male household-head's special authorisation or ratification, would become invalid by law and denied by society (d.6 1984: 134). Even after her husband was dead, the title of household-head was inherited by his eldest son (even if he was still young) and not by her. Any authority she might exercise would be treated as a temporary and transitional feature only (d.6 1984:133). Her freedom over the management of property was particularly strictly restrained. [14].

Though the status of motherhood was highly qualified, a mother did hold a certain influence in the family structure because the emphasis on the filial duty - the foundation of all virtue and morality in Chinese tradition. This meant that a mother deserved equal respect as a father in some ways, such as: the three year period for children to remain in mourning was the same in respect of both father and mother; and both father and mother had the same legal right of suing their children (d.6 1984: 18). Filial duty let

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[14] This difference was evident in a Taiwanese social custom that a father had absolute right to sell his children without requesting any permission, but a mother could do it only if the whole lineage had no objection and no families in the lineage had intention to adopt. (h.59 1987: 113)

"mother" became the only role where a woman could escape from the destiny of being entirely enslaved by male values.

In addition, as *yen-fu* (the stern father) was the only cultural figure for the male household-head in this patriarchy (d.3 1983:187), a father had to keep a distant relationship from his family in all circumstances. In contrast with a father's severity, demanding absolute obedience and remoteness, a "loving mother" would normally be warm, considerate and tolerant. The authorised role of deputy household-head let the mother have power over female family members and daily domestic finances, making a mother the real domestic centre, the bridge between the father and all the others at home, and sometime even let a mother function as a father-and-mother on most domesticity. She thus became an honourable and powerful "behind-the-scenes" figure in real life. "To be a mother" became the essential goal for most Chinese women in history.

Unfortunately, as the role of motherhood could at the same time be a potential threat to the position and privileges of a male household-head, a mother's authority was always strictly limited to certain issues and spheres and was also subsidiary to that of the father. A mother had no alternative but to be loyal to the father, and to become the main performer and transmitter of the male values on domesticity (e.27 1991: 94). The traditional Chinese maternal function was merely to instruct her daughters in social requirements and make them duplicates of herself as passive cultural figures (e.26 1991: 87). Her function relative to her sons was only allowed to be subordinate of other form of orthodox ethics (e.g. patriotism), and to be indirectly expressed by media of morality (a.25 1988: 303). The power of motherhood in the traditional Chinese lineage not only never developed in such a way as to overcome sexual discrimination against women, but it was always the biggest obstacle to female self-awareness throughout Chinese history (e.27 1991:94).

4-6.2 **Wife and daughter-in-law**

According to Confucian canon, "the wife is the person equal to you (men)" 妻與己齊者. Thus, in theory the relationship between husband and wife should not only be the basis of the five principles of human relationship

[15], but also should be equal. But, in reality, the relationship between a husband and his wife was extremely unequal. As Sima Kuang 司馬光 (a great scholar of the Sung dynasty) advocated in The Admonishment to Offspring 訓子孫 "...husband is the heaven, the sun and *yang*; wife is the earth, the moon and *yin*; the heaven is up because it is noble; the earth is low because it is humble; the sun does not change its form but the moon does..." (a.9 1986: 134). A woman deserved a respect from men because of her sacred duties of serving worship and bearing descendants, not because of her being a unique person (d.6 1984: 132); the discriminative idea of "three obedience and four virtue" (cf. section 3-2) was still the essence of behavioural criteria for women in daily lives.

A wife (*ch'i*) was a member of her husband's family; through this relationship she attained kinship with all her husband's kinsfolk, and became part of all his family's economic actions and lineage ceremonies. This applied not only to herself, but also to the product of her labour. Her personal property, brought from her natal family, would belong to her husband's family; most of the cultural relationship with her own parents would cease upon her marriage and even her original close relationship with her own mother would undergo a big change in both reality and symbolically. However, one must remember that the traditional concept of marriage was the matter of linking two family's social resource for the purposes of maintaining family's prosperity, and not for the sake of the marrying couple. A so-called "good" wife to the Chinese was defined by how much she could benefit the lineage, and not how much she love her husband and certainly not how beautiful she was. This meant the symbolic status of a daughter-in-law to family was much more important than the sexual role of a wife to any particular individual. For example, even though the real relationships of a couple had occurred (sexual relationship and living together), her status would be denied if the ceremony of *miao-chien* 廟見 (interviewing the ancestral temple - being introduced to the parents-in-law and the ancestors) was not completed [16].

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15 The other four are the emperor and subjects, the father and sons, brothers, and friends.

16 According to the ancient custom, the ceremony would be held on the day three months after the wedding in order to test the bride. If the bride died before the ceremony, the marriage would be treated as incomplete, the body of the bride therefore would be sent back to her natal home, and she would not be regarded as an ancestor in either families; also she

In contrast with the acknowledged virtues for a "good" wife such as obedience, diligence, chastity, dignity, etc., there were seven conditions for divorce, named *ch'i-ch'u* 七出, regulated by the law. These were namely: not bearing a son, debauchery, failing in her filial duty towards parents-in-law, talking too much, stealing, jealousy and having dirty diseases (d.6 1984: 162), All were held to have a damaging effect upon the lineage system and were punishable accordingly. As there was almost no place for an abandoned woman in society, and as none of the conditions for divorce concerned the feelings between a couple and could be only decided by the husband (or by the parents-in-law but under the name of the husband) (d.6 1984: 165); a wife usually lived under the long-term dread of being divorced. The traditional role of a wife under the circumstances could be characterised as follows:

(1) A wife seldom dared to interfere in her husband's business or behaviour, nor did she argue about her own grievances, but remained feminine and obedient, self-oppressed and reliant on her husband.

(2) A wife sought to give birth to as many sons as possible, and control them by over-mothering them thus subtly strengthening her domestic position and power.

(3) She would make herself up very carefully in order to please and attract her husband. This became one of the most important daily routines, though a wife normally went nowhere and still had to do domestic tasks [17].

(4) Protecting her virtue became the most important thing in her life because any lapse, however accidental, would become an unforgiving cause for divorce. and

(5) To flatter parents-in-law by any available means under the name of filial piety, regardless of whether or not she was actually being sincere, because the opinions of her parents-in-law were critically important to the continuation of her marriage (cf. section 4-2).

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could be returned if she did not satisfy her husband's family in that period. As this was really too long for accidents, customs changed to the bride's being interviewed by parents-in-law in the second morning of the wedding, and by ancestors on the third day. (d.6 1984: 130)

[17] Makeup in classic popular literature was even treated as a sign of female virtue. As a woman was expected to be unattractive to preserve her virtue when her husband was away, makeup during this period would be regarded as attempting to be seductive and the evidence of lewdness.

Under such conditions a wife almost lost all her self-identity and self-determination, and was required to live almost entirely for all others rather than herself.

In summary, being a wife was simply one of the roles played by a married woman. She had also frequently to be a mother, a female household-head, a deputy household-head, a daughter-in-law, or even a daughter and all such roles might be more influential than that of wife itself. However, regardless of the real emotional relationship between her and her husband, the lineage system and the law at least acknowledged and protected her cultural status and social position. In addition, wife was still the only female role that could be upgraded to that of female household-head and deputy household-head, and allowed her to share this honourable title thanks to her husband. Thus be a wife was still the most important first step to all women.

4-6.3 **Concubine**

Though the traditional Chinese society adopted monogamy, and bigamy had been illegal since the Chou dynasty (d.6 1984: 169), polygamy never actually ceased to be part of the lineage system. Polygamy was justified as a legal form of "one wife and many concubines" [18]. The system of "one formal wife" was merely a smoke screen behind which males were able to behave as they wished and the lineage demanded .

Unlike a wife who was married for lineage purpose, who was usually educated to be serious and inaccessible (a.24 1983: 35), whose relationship with her husband was informed more by duty and obligation than concern with sex and love, sex was merely an obligation, for whom passion was never acceptable in matrimonial relationship, as an old saying that "a couple

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18 The status of wife and concubine had no difference before the Chou dynasty, and they were found in several special conditions in later ages too. For instance, when the only heir had to succeed to two *fang*s at the same time, both that of his own parents and that of his symbolical adopter would ask him to marry two wives for each *fang* for their own descendants, so two women would be admitted the status of wife at the same time. This suggested that its cultural meaning was much more important than its real form. (a.1 1979: 84)

in bed is like guest and host out of bed" (this was the only acceptable relationship between husband and wife in traditional marriage), and who might even be ugly since men were encouraged to marry ugly women because they were understood to be born wealthy and noble [19], a concubine (*ch'ieh*) was chosen by a man according to his own power and economic status. Concubines promised more passion, pleasing sex, or even true love, and were concerned less about lineage duty even though they did ensure more offspring. It therefore could be said that the popularity of concubinage was directly if discreetly encouraged by the impersonal and distant nature of traditional matrimonial relationships, and had nothing to do with the population ratio. This allowed concubinage be warmly welcomed in China throughout history. Actually, as sex was somehow a natural accessory of a man's achievement, a man could easily win many women when he got an official rank or wealth, the number of concubines therefore was never a point of argument or a problem of morality in traditional Chinese society, unless one had concubines before one achieved anything, or the number of concubines exceeded what one's social status deserved. (e.33 1988: 41). This was true of immigrant Taiwan after the late 18th century.

However the position of concubine was only one level higher than a maidservant in the family. It was also demonstrated in the size of her monthly allowance which normally was much smaller than that of a wife and only little more than that of a maid (b.20 1984: 156). That a concubine was normally treated simply as an object for sex, and not as a person, was undoubtedly strongly associated with their humble origins and the way they were bought and sold [20]; but the more important reason could be that her legal right was denied by the law, and the status of a family was not admitted by the lineage system (d.6 1984: 172). A concubine was not treated

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19 The Chinese believed that a beautiful wife could only bring bad luck to both her husband and herself because of the association of sex; but an ugly woman who was less sexually attractive was destined to be the wife of a prominent official.(a.9 1986: 224)

20 The sources of concubines were: (1) To purchase a *skin-horse* (瘦馬 - as a woman for sale in market was called) from people-dealers (a.24 1983: 136); (2) To upgrade one from among his own maidservants - as they were bought from outside, anyone who was beautiful was easily treated as a sexual object (a.24 1983:133); (3) To purchase prostitutes from brothels - their professional background made them be welcome to high ranking officers and the rich because of frequent banquets and entertainment, they could even to be treated as a gift for the master's social climbing.(a.24 1983: 181)

as an "entire" family, neither would she have kinship with the male household-head's relatives (even the wife was more like the "formal" mother of the concubine's own children - d.38 1991: 244), nor could she get a title after her husband like the wife. She was forbidden to replace the wife by law even if she was much more beloved than the wife in reality [21]. She would always be under the authority of the wife, and was required to serve and respect the wife as a "master", and to call all family members by their title just like the servants. Being upheld by the filial duty, her own (or adoptive) children's names were the only names she was allowed to call directly (d.6 1984: 172-173), and they were the only family members who had obligation to mourn her death (d.38 1991:243). She was not allowed to attend any ceremony of the lineage and was not qualified to worship ancestors or became an ancestor, and she would not be listed in written genealogies of her husband's lineage (d.38 1991:243); she was also totally forbidden to be a deputy household-head or a female household-head. However, although, according to the law and the lineage system, a concubine could not offend the wife under any circumstances, since the powers of wives and concubines were both authorised by the husband, in reality this principle allowed for lots of exceptions because concubines were often able to win special favours from their husband.

Jealously was common place between wife and concubines, not least because the latter's inferior background usually humiliated the wife. One who was upgraded from amongst her own maidservants would cause the greatest humiliation. That led most concubines to live in a hostile environment and to have to learn aggression as a way of ensuring their survival (a.24 1983:135). The house would often resemble a battlefield, mentally if not physically. The concubinage was at one and the same time a great benefit to the lineage system (guaranteeing more descendants) and a cause of potential damage (because of its threat to domestic harmony) (a.24 1983:182).

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21 The law prohibited the replacement of a wife by a concubine since the Tang dynasty. No matter how much a concubine was favoured, her appearance at an official occasion would never be accepted by society. Formal status as a wife could only be achieved under a certain ritual process after the original wife was dead. (a.9 1986: 64)

4-6.4 **Daughter**

To be a daughter (*nu-er*) could be the most embarrassing role for a woman in the Chinese lineage system due to her being totally cut off from formal acknowledgement. Daughters had an incomplete status in the system, because only married women could be identified as social beings and became ancestors. She was also had a mixed role and status within the parents' family. She might be loved as a child but she was at the same time excluded from all rights associated with the father's lineage because she was an outsider in the Chinese genealogy.

Though the enormous cultural premium put on the importance of having sons as male heirs (particularly in the lineage ideology), daughters were normally seen as economic burdens and their real status was culturally devalued, leading to the most prejudices and discriminations against them. As most Chinese parents understood very well that their daughters' sojourn with them was only temporary, and usually were mindful of their daughters' unpredictable fate after they were married and that great changes awaited them within her husband's family. Most Chinese parents, like parents everywhere, loved and doted on their daughters, and treated them as beloved guests in the house during the time before they were married (a.24 1983: 17), if the girls were lucky enough to be brought up by the parents who were free from living pressures. Therefore, in spite of their ambiguous family role and uncertain status they had a considerable and significant influence on domestic harmony, especially through their unique role as a bridge between their mother and the sisters-in-law (a.24 1983: 16). In this period, though they were excluded from all rights, they escaped from all duties as well (the duty of domestic finance must mainly go to her brothers, and the duty of domestic tasks had mostly to go to her sisters-in-law). The only restraint on them was to protect their virtue, and learn how to be a good daughter-in-law for the sake of the family honour.

4-6.5 **Maidservant**

Maidservants (*pei*) have to be mentioned as part of the domestic structure because: (i) "All superior and inferior people in the family had to be registered as family"; such registration had been regulated by law since the Tang dynasty (a.44 1966: 78); (ii) not only were most of them the permanent

property of the family [22], but also they were normally attached to certain female "masters" who dealt with their personal affairs; and (iii) according to the social class and status emphasised by the traditional Chinese society [23], an inferior man was forbidden to have any love affairs with a superior woman, but a superior man was free to have sexual relationship with any inferior women. This meant that the maidservant could have a more complicated relationship and a deeper involvement in the domestic power structure than a manservant, and this made them more like "real" family members and insiders.

Maidservants were very popular even in middle class families because of the real demands of the interior court. Immigrant Taiwan after the mid 18th century was no exception (h.59-2 1987: 136). As they were treated as family property, beautiful maidservants could easily be sexually abused by male family members, especially by the male household-head who had the power of absolute ownership. The maidservant thus might easily became an object of jealousy for a wife and even for concubines. An ugly maidservant might escape sexual abuse more easily than the beautiful one, but almost all heavy domestic duties would be delegated to her and she might be treated as work-horse. As there was little concern for feelings or even for life (a.44 1966: 76), masters, especially female masters who had responsibility for domestic affairs, usually expressed their authority with little sympathy. Domestic punishments could be even more serious and inhumane than those that criminals received in court (The Family Precept of Meng-chi 孟箕, Ming dynasty - a.24 1983: 134). Since old Taiwan's customs discouraged men from taking maidservants as wives, unlike the case in mainland China where a master could easily get benefit from "marrying" them

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22 There were two kinds of servant in the Ch'ing law: the *red-contract* 紅契 was a life-long servant, not only could they not recover their freedom, but their children inherited the status and all their relationships, and the contract had to be sealed by the government; the *white-contract* 白契 was a servant who was allowed to recover freedom according to civil agreements, and did not have to endorsed by the government.(h.59-2 1987: 136)

23 There were four ranks for the superior class in order: the scholar, the peasant, the worker, and the merchant; and nine ranks for the inferior class, the prostitute was at the first place and the servant ranked only seventh out of nine. The inequality between status in the same class might be weak, but most communication between the superior and the inferior, especially marriage, was strictly blocked. This social class did not concern one's wealth but only one's status, and one's status could be changed by one's efforts. (d.6 1984: 290)

to other inferior men, the position of maidservant in immigrant Taiwan was especially difficult. Not only would they normally be transferred several times (usually for a higher price), but also most of them would be forbidden to marry and be enslaved for their entire lifetime (h.59-2 1987: 160).

However, though their position was low and harsh, they played the genuine "shadow" medium of most domestic tension, because of their more convenient role in malicious spying and domestic rumour-mongering, especially as their easily sexual relationships with the male household-head made domestic power structure more complicated and uncontrollable. The maidservant did cast an uncertain factor on to traditional lineage value.

4-6.6 **The sub-domestic-structure of female family**

Though the interrelation between women in a family could be complicated, this sub-domestic-structure built up by only the female family members can be examined under two headings:

(1) The vertical relationships between a mother and all her daughters-in-law. This could be the biggest problem in a traditional Chinese family, and normally was the main cause behind the unfortunate marriages of the second generation. This tense relationship possibly resulted from: (i) the mental compensation or the aggression of "displacement" (attacking a displaced target for one's revenge whilst one can not fight back against the real strong oppressor - a.33 1986: 491) resulting from the experience that being tortured by her mother-in-law dictatorially in her youth would make her cathartically take it out on the weak when she became a figure of authority, as in the old saying that "one can be a mother-in-law after ten years hard endurance of being a daughter-in-law"; (ii) under the society with limited information, the matchmaker usually was dishonest to both families in order to achieve the matrimonial agreement and this cheating caused damage and irritated the husband's family, and let the daughter-in-law be a scapegoat; (iii) a daughter-in-law was just an untrustworthy person from outside, a mother usually let her own daughter be her stool pigeon and was naturally absolutely partial to her; the conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was thus easily incited by daughter's bad personality or misunderstanding (a.24 1983: 17); (iv) under the cold patriarchy, a mother normally had a sense of life-sharing with her sons, the

sons' being "stolen" from her hands by their wives after marriage would let a mother, unconsciously, adopt hostility towards her daughters-in-law.

(2) The horizontal relationship between female family members can be doubly divided into two sub-categories of the wife and concubines, and between sisters-in-law. As jealousy was almost unavoidable between the wife and concubines in a polygamous family, the inter-relationship of a wife and concubines became the main source of tension in the upper level of the family, and the core of domestic conflict [24]. In contrast with the tension between the wife and concubines, conflict between sisters-in-law could be the main source of tension in the lower level of the family. Their suspicion and aggression became difficult to avoid in this competitive environment because a woman only moved within two highly limiting worlds (her father's family and her husband's family) in her lifetime, and it was understandable that (i) she should behave in a narrow-minded, ignorant, and selfish way for her own limited interests, (ii) their different family backgrounds provided a weak basis for friendships, and (iii) many of them were too young to be mentally mature [25].

In brief, under the agnatic hierarchy of the family within the limited space for co-residence, it was hard to avoid competition between the female family members. One's gain normally was accompanied by others' loss, and the weakest in the group would usually become the victim or scapegoat under the "rule of the jungle" (a.33 1986: 490). Selfishness, though it was a part of human nature, was especially difficult to avoid in competitive relationships and inflicted the greatest direct damage on the joint lives. Any form of suspicion could easily become permanent distrust, leading to hostile competition and creating wide gaps between a wife and concubines and sisters-in-law, and could easily intertwine and affect the co-operative relationship between *fang*s. This sub-domestic-structure became

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24 Men knew that a jealous wife would be the biggest problem to the polygamous system, jealousy was thus made one of the premises of divorce and was emphasised as the worst female characteristic (adultery was the absolute taboo) (a.24 1983: 17). Women were also taught, as a mental foot-binding, that a wife would damage her own nobility if she was jealous of humble concubines. (a.24 1983: 55)

25 According to the law of the Ch'ing, 14 years old was the suitable age for women to marry, but according to old Taiwan's customs, it could be two years younger (a.11 1993: 11). That made the role of wife usually started at very immature stage, and could very possible be an important remote cause of the domestic conflicts.

a potential danger causing the collapse of the cohesiveness of family and speeding up the *fen-fang*. Unfortunately, it seems that this crisis caused by the female family members was unavoidable in most traditional Chinese families.

4-6.7 **The influence of women in the family**

Theoretically, a wife should have had every reason to be afraid of and implicitly obedient to her husband since the father got complete support from the lineage system, society and law. But in practice, "the hen does the duty of morning call" was popular in the traditional Chinese society. This subtle reversal of roles could be reasonably explained as follows:

1. De-individuation (Diener, 1980 - a.33 1986: 671) was a common problem of personality cultivation to the Chinese men in the traditional Chinese family [26]. As all individual behaviour was just a part of group behaviour, people hid themselves anonymously in the group, and did not bother to be responsible for their behaviour or to care about its result. That could cause Chinese men to become irresponsible, and weakly reliant on the family like immature boys, so their wives had the opportunity to usurp their power and became a "real" household-head.

2. It was the side effect of the marriage of families that had very different social positions or wealth. A wife from a wealthy and powerful family was normally brought up to be proud and uncontrollable, and her strong backup would encourage her to be constantly overbearing in her husband's family. The husband, sometimes even the whole lineage, had to tolerate her being domineering because of the social implications (a.24 1983: 29 - 32).

3. The notion that "men mastered exterior and women mastered interior" let a man concentrate only on outside business, and gradually become ignorant about domestic affairs. Therefore, even though the finances were theoretically still under a father's authority, he would often be totally controlled by the mother in everyday life.

4. As all members lived under the common wealth of the family and inherited an equal share of it later on, the knowledge that one's gain was

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26 In an authoritative group, self-identity usually was replaced by the group behaviour and the common recognition, all persons could be trapped in the group consciousness, and became more and more difficult to evaluate one's own values. (a.33 1986: 671)

nothing to do with one's effort and contribution encouraged most of the male family members to become lazy and to use up the family money for their own satisfaction, such as on gambling and prostitution. Their sense of guilt let them adopt a tolerant attitude towards their tough wives in exchange for peace and quiet.

5. More concubines led to more chances for arguments developing between the wife and concubines. For peace and quiet, a male household-head usually allowed his wife to have real authority over domestic discipline.

The other universal potential damage to the values of the traditional Chinese family is so-called "uterine family" (Margery Wolf 1972 - h.38 1985: 127). As mentioned in section 4.3, the female family usually struggled to become the female household-head of her own independent *fang* as soon as possibly, this invisible body of semi-power, which including only herself and her own children, was built by a woman for confirming her power and benefits to oppose her mother-in-law's complete domination and her husband's power. It would become a trump card in forcing her husband to compromise and to speed up the *fen-fang*, and thus the influence of a woman in a family, even she was still an "invisible" part in the hierarchy, could be hardly ignored in practice.

However, though there could be a big grey zone for woman between the limitation of culture and influence in practice, unless the husband was really timid, weak, or incapable, a wife, even when she was a widow female household-head, would still have to submit herself to the strong restraints imposed by the lineage system and by the legal prohibitions of the law [27], and, on the surface at least, restrain her aggressiveness. Because of this self-limitation, women normally turned all their conflict onto other female family members instead, this led to women themselves became

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[27] As the relationship of a husband to his wives was a straightforward relationship of noble to humble, punishment to his wives was regarded as parental discipline. A husband could punish his wife freely for reasons of family discipline, and even if the wife was seriously wounded, a petition for divorce was only valid when the husband agreed. On the contrary, any wife's self-defence was treated as a condition of divorce. And though the right to kill a wife was prohibited by the law before the Yuan dynasty, it did ambiguously exist in the regulation of "the seven conditions of divorce". This privilege made men even more authoritative in matrimonial relations. (d.6 1984: 135 - 142)

entirely a cannibal group in spirit, and led to men's privilege in the family be double protected unintentionally.

Therefore, though women played only minor role "backstage" in this patriarchy, they were actually much more positive, aggressive and decisive in most aspects of practical daily lives in a family. Through such "ordinary" domestic roles, rather than through the cultural roles they were formally assigned for agnatic descent, they exerted a subtle but highly significant influence on the value system of the family

4-7 Summary

As the Chinese household was a co-residence structure, all duties were a kind of additive task (the achievement of the group was the assemblage of all its members' efforts - Steiner, 1992) (a.33 1986: 654). Unfortunately the achievements of co-operation would normally reduce as the number of members increased. This might result from: (1) The effect of "social loafing" (a.33 1986: 661) such that any individual effort would easily be neglected within a collective group, and so members of the group tended to be irresponsible in their own behaviour or reduce their productivity. (2) The system of *fen-fang* was based on a false equality; the property was equally divided and decided by lots, according to the qualification of *fang* and not to individual effort and contribution. This disparity between reward and contribution enabled most family members to escape from their duties.

Therefore, though ethical teaching attempted to make every member play a proper role by a simple and clear rule of family, it could prevent human weakness playing its role, and that meant that when it was exposed to the tensions, contradictions and complicated inter-relationships present in domestic lives, the family system became very difficult to manage and maintain.

Based on the principle of gender distinction and the rule of the division of the cultural duty that "men mastered the exterior and women mastered the interior", men's activities were severely limited in the interior spaces of the house. In order not to be self-indulgent as far as his wives

were concerned, a man must not stay in the interior space or his room unless he was ill, when he stayed at home during the daytime. As men were barred from the interior courts and the spaces where domestic tasks were carried out, the exterior court of the house became the only place where a man was allowed.

However since almost all the spaces of the interior court were formal, ready for ceremonial, and not for relaxation. In addition, men were often grateful to escape from the domestic problems started between female family members, especially the conflict between the wife and the concubines, whilst the outside sensual world was normally much more attractive than the serious home world because it involved no family duty or ethics. Most men would therefore stay outside for real relaxation and social relationships, and thus women became the real full-time users of the house and the mother became the real wielder of daily authority. This was reinforced by the phenomena by which it was common for a husband to be afraid of his wife so female family members did have some extent of influence on most of domestic affairs in reality in most traditional Chinese families.

In summary, Chinese traditional values in androcentric vision were totally designed for the male advantage. Men, especially the figure of the father, were the centre of everything, and the sex to them was just as simple as the natural corollary of their achievements. Yet women had never been really treated as having an identity, nor had they been actively considered in the cultural perspective of what anthropologists call "lineage paradigm" (Janes L. Watson - h.63 1986: 274). This does not mean that there was no love between families in traditional Chinese families, but only all kinds of human emotions between them, passion between a couple in particular, must be strictly hidden behind the "mask" of cold ethics and expressed only by the most decorous forms.

A woman as a responsible cultural figure was held to be much more important than a beloved "genuine" woman. Sex to them could be just a duty or a routine task, and their happiness was only ever brought about by chance. This led to them almost universally expressing their desires through spiritual dependence and sycophancy towards their men; jealousy and

hostility towards other women; confused emotion and maternal feelings for sons; and contradiction and conflict towards mothers-in-law. All of these combined to become a form of direct mental torment for most women in traditional Chinese society, and form of indirect mental torment to most Chinese men.

Chapter 5

The patrifocal notion of the traditional Chinese house

Although traditional Chinese architecture had its own local character which was dependent on area, on differences in climate and on regional folk customs, basic principles and practice relating to spatial planning were very similar to each other, and did not change essentially from their origins during nearly two thousand year of development after the prototype had been established in the Han dynasty. The traditional courtyard house in Taiwan was no exception. It remained for all times true to its homeland architectural characteristic whilst the development reached its most mature form in the nineteenth century. This chapter illustrates how its spatial organisation derived from traditional Chinese concepts based on humanistic values. It argues that the conception was father - rather than male - centred

5-1 The origin of the courtyard house

The courtyard house, that has been proved to have developed from very early times, can be treated as the basic model of traditional Chinese architecture. The earliest known prototype of the courtyard house, built in about B.C. 2238 - 2538 was discovered on the historical site of E-li-t'ou 二里頭 in He-nan 河南 (9 km south-western side from Yen-shih 偃師) in 1959 (Fig. 5-1). (Site A was the palace of the Hsia dynasty 夏室 and the *great-she* 大社 whilst site B (Fig. 5-1-g) was a building which had rooms for the emperor's family)

Dr. Hsu Ming-fu (Professor of the Deptartment of Architecture, Cheng-kung University, Taiwan) gave a convincing argument in his study (f.24 1990: 47 - 100) that the *great-she* was an "architecture" (it may more properly to be called a place) at which the chief was able, with his people, to

communicate with heaven (Fig. 5-1-a). When political and humanistic concerns were emphasised more and more in later years, the single centre of the "place" that allowed people to surround and face to was developed to become two centres for the god and the *wu-shou* (the chief-shaman) 巫首. The space for surrounding people was gradually developed into surrounding buildings with rooms for chief-shaman's families and vassals, as the model discovered at Feng-ch'u 鳳雛 (Fig. 5-2 and 5-3) showed.

The age of the example discovered at the site of Feng-ch'u was identified as being from the Chou dynasty 周 (about B.C. 1005 - 1185). Though its side house had not been completely developed, its courtyard form was already very clear. Judging from the structure of patrifocal clanship which was known to exist in that era (a.44. 1966: 2 - 5), matters relating to gods and politics were strictly of concern only to men, and should be exclusively attended to only by men as well. It can therefore be almost definitely confirmed as a male-central spatial organisation.

The principles of the courtyard house were established no later than the Western-Han dynasty 西漢. Figure 5-4 shows its spatial principles as follows:

* Walls were used to physically identify the space; the interior and exterior were clearly separated and distinguished.

* The site plan presented a clear idea of prospect and orientation; its doorway and the main hall (*t'ing*) showed the importance of the central axis;.and the emphasis of the southern gate also suggested that ancient cosmology did somehow influence the architectural concept.

* The east and west stair-cases, paths and the separate rooms for the host and guests, showed the idea of symmetry, and the importance of different sides for noble and humble people.

* The different symbolic meanings of the central hall and the side rooms showed the notion of the spatial hierarchy within the domestic spatial organisation.

*The stone tablet in the central place of the court, associated with the central pole in the *great-she* (Fig. 5-1-b), suggested that the court retained its dignified ritual meaning.

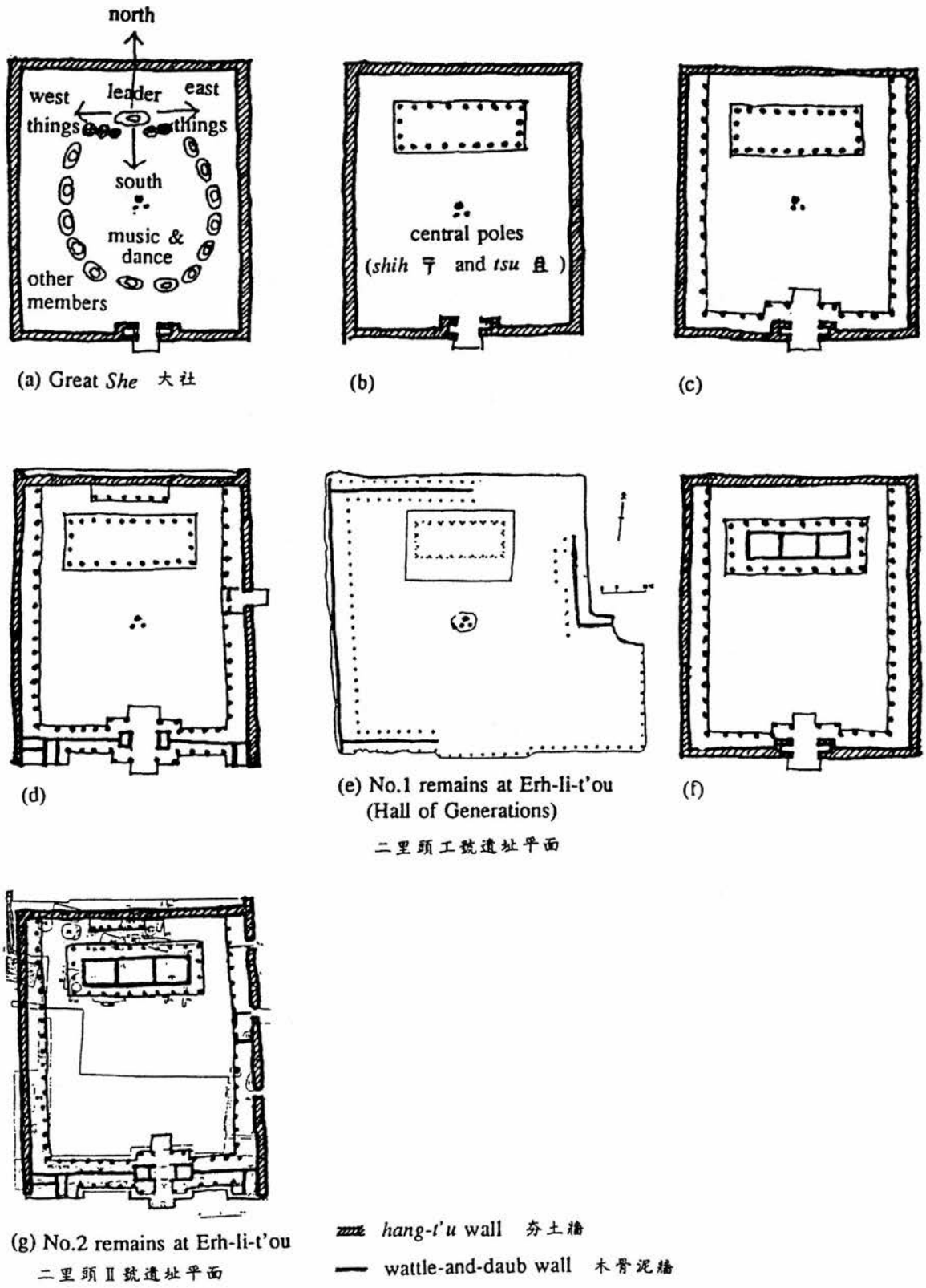
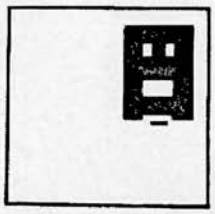


Fig. 5-1 The development of the prototype of the Chinese courtyard house (from f.25 - fig. 26)



The building, about 45.2 m long and 32.5 m wide, was located at the north-eastern corner of the 80-cm-high square earth foundation (as shown left)

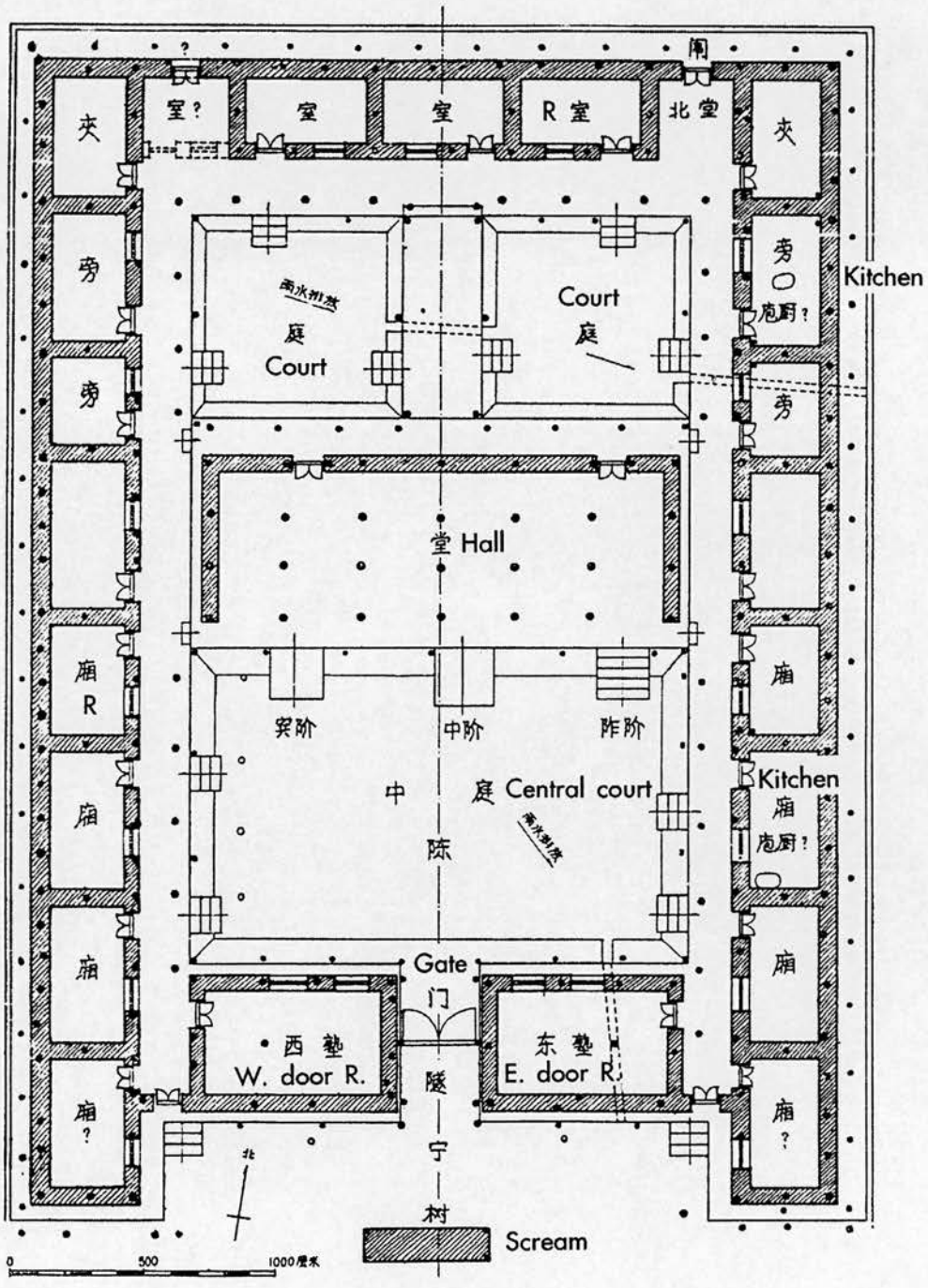


Fig. 5-2 The archaeological site of Feng-ch'u (the palace of A group - about B.C. 1045 - 1145) (after b.33 - fig. 26)

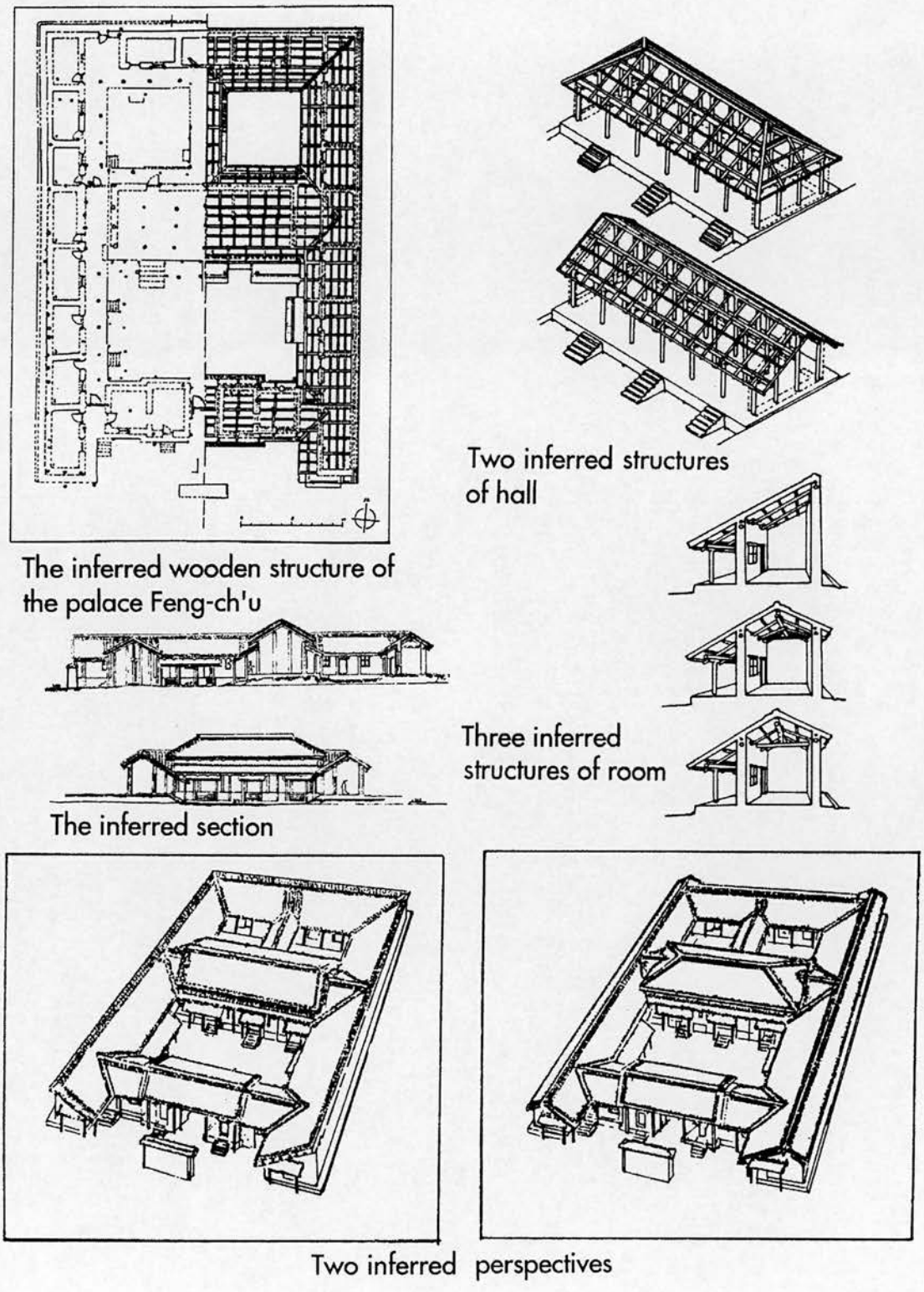


Fig. 5-3 Inferred organisation and models of Feng-ch'u archaeological site (A group) (from b.33)

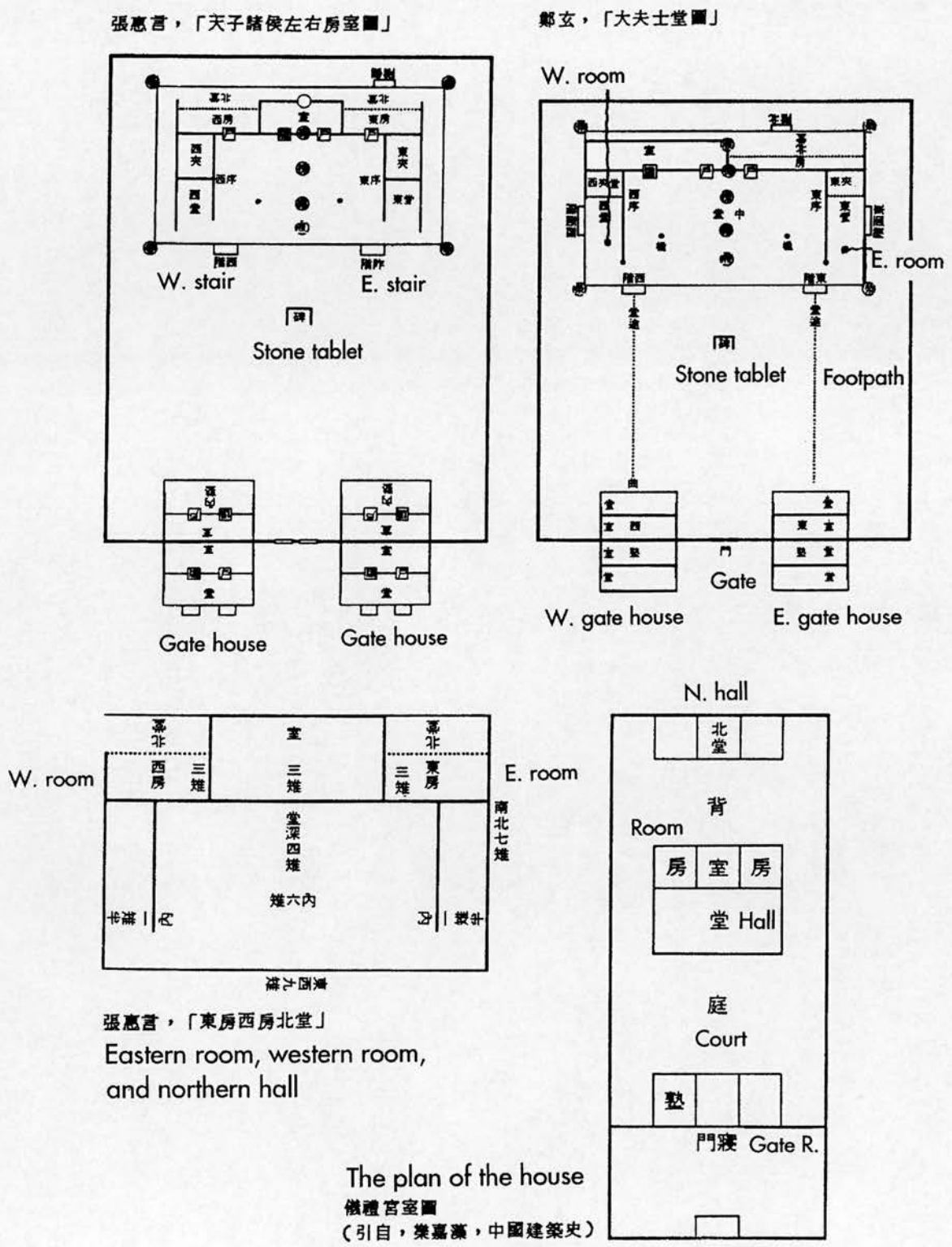


Fig. 5-4 The forms of the courtyard house in the Han dynasty (from b.33: 130)

Since it had been regulated by the K'e-kung-chi 考工記 in the Han dynasty and became a part of the "system of ceremonial forms" (b.34 1985: 19), and further restrained by the social norms and limited by the power of superstition-like construction taboos in later ears, the principle of the courtyard house lasted for thousands years without essential change, and became one of the most important and eternal characteristics of the traditional Chinese architecture. Since all traditional Chinese values originated from the same ancient cosmology, and infiltrated each other, the spatial concept that expressed the Chinese value system led to the house becoming the most tangible and true expression of traditional Chinese ideology. This was especially evident in the architectural development in 19th century Taiwan when rigid rules of construction were followed which, it can be argued abused *feng-shui* principle, and over-emphasised the value of ancient tradition.

5-2 Architecture in immigrant Taiwan

The courtyard house possesses some of the most important characteristics of traditional Chinese architecture. As the principles of the courtyard house had become canon since the Han dynasty, this form dominated the development of Chinese architecture over two thousand years, without any intrinsic change. Almost all traditional houses of the Han people were designed and constructed with reference to the architectural concepts of the court-and-house form, irrespective of the building scale or function or the status of the occupant. Given, however, that mainland China covered a very large territory, local character was still made apparent in the houses which adapted to local environments and different customs. Chinese architecture could thus be roughly classified into the southern branch (for south-eastern coastal provinces of mainland China) and the northern branch (for most central and northern provinces).(b.36 1975: 9)

In Traditional Architecture in Taiwan (f.25 1981:333 - 335), Professor Han Pao-te (Head of the National Scientific Museum; ex-Head of the Department of Architecture, Tung-hai University, Taiwan) argued that:

> ...the northern branch of the Chinese courtyard house had more independent single houses inside the area, and the arrangement was freer and more spread-out;

buildings filled the majority of the site plan, and courtyards appeared as the remaining spaces between the buildings (Fig. 5-5). On the contrary, the southern branch of the Chinese courtyard house, as figure 5-6 shows, had a tight and strict site plan; symmetric and geometric considerations were more significant (Fig. 5-7); as each building was connected with other buildings, and walls were treated as a part of the building, and became an important element of the space, so that the courtyard could easily be identified; the courtyard became the centre of the whole group of buildings... Contrasted with the northern branch's feel for the horizontal, its monotony and heaviness, with almost all adopting the quartet courtyard type, the southern branch of courtyard houses are delicate, decorative and frivolous. That may be because the southern area had richer social conditions and a more romantic character; both literature and handicrafts were progressive, and the people were more superstitious and their lifestyle was more luxurious. The rules of architecture proclaimed by the government [1] seemed to be tacitly loose there; and the triad-courtyard house was commonly adopted...

The dominant form of architecture in Taiwan originated from the Fujian system, one of the important elements of the southern branch of Chinese architecture notable for its progressive carpentry and stone sculpture [2]. In practice, and certainly in the beginning, the Taiwan version of the imported traditional form of architecture was on an altogether simpler and smaller scale largely as a consequence of the disruptive influence of wars and civil rebellions, and reflecting the more basic and transient lifestyle of the immigrant communities. Taiwan architecture began to develop its own special character only after the island society stabilised in the nineteenth century. Throughout and like a lineage connection, Taiwan houses remained true to the principle of Fujian architecture, despite their major difference in climatic conditions.

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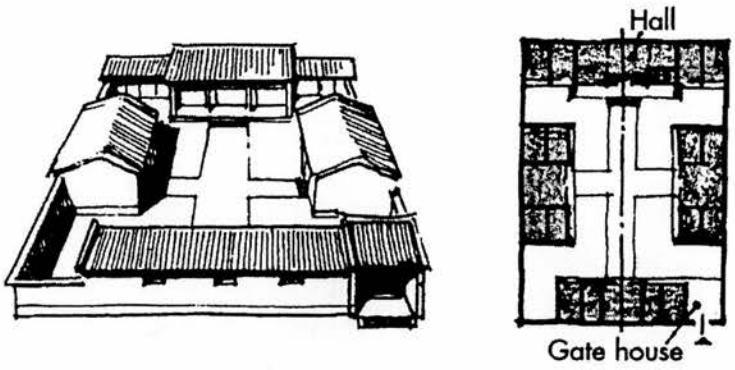
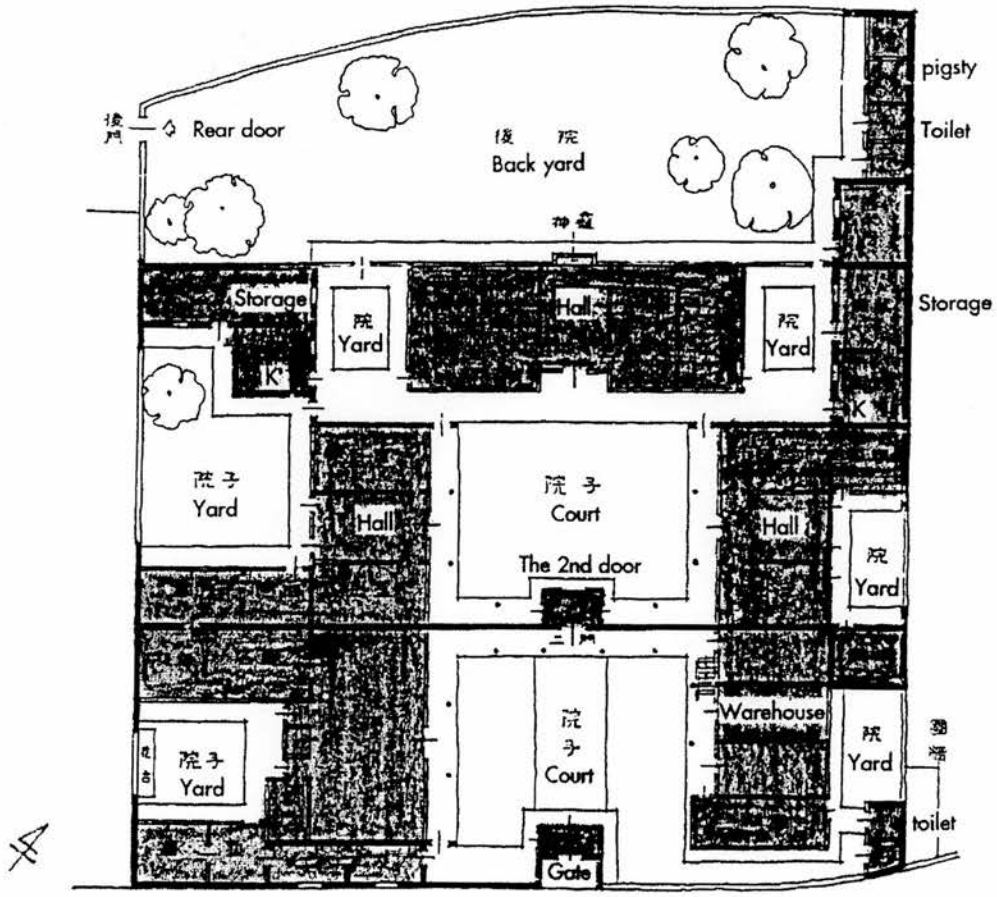
[1] All about architecture, such as: the measurement and type of structure, the form of the roof and the ridge, the colour of roof and door, the height of the platform and the number of its stairs, and the themes of decorations etc. were regulated to fit one's social class, especially for the houses of officials and governmental buildings. (清營造則例)

[2] Fujian house presented evident local character. For example, the red brick and red roof tile were used to be the main coloration of buildings, that were different from the other southern Chinese architecture which was mainly in white and grey; also, it developed a cantilevering component which stretched out only forwards, different from the structure of the others that stretched to both front and sides. But its spatial organisation was definitely not different from others. (f.25 1981: 336)

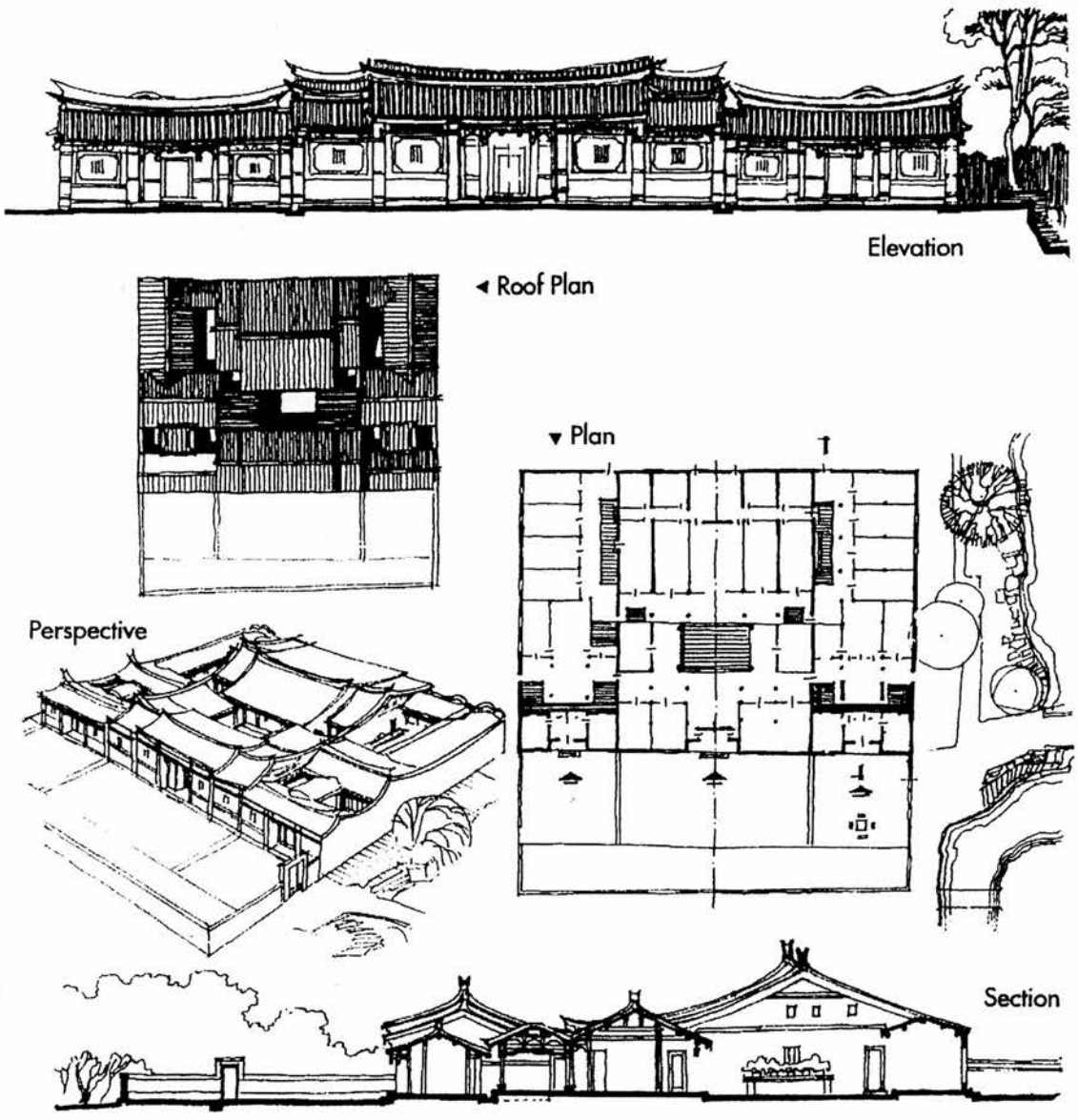


(Courtyard house in Beijing - from The residence of Fujian)



(Liu mansion, Hsin-lin, Hu-nan)

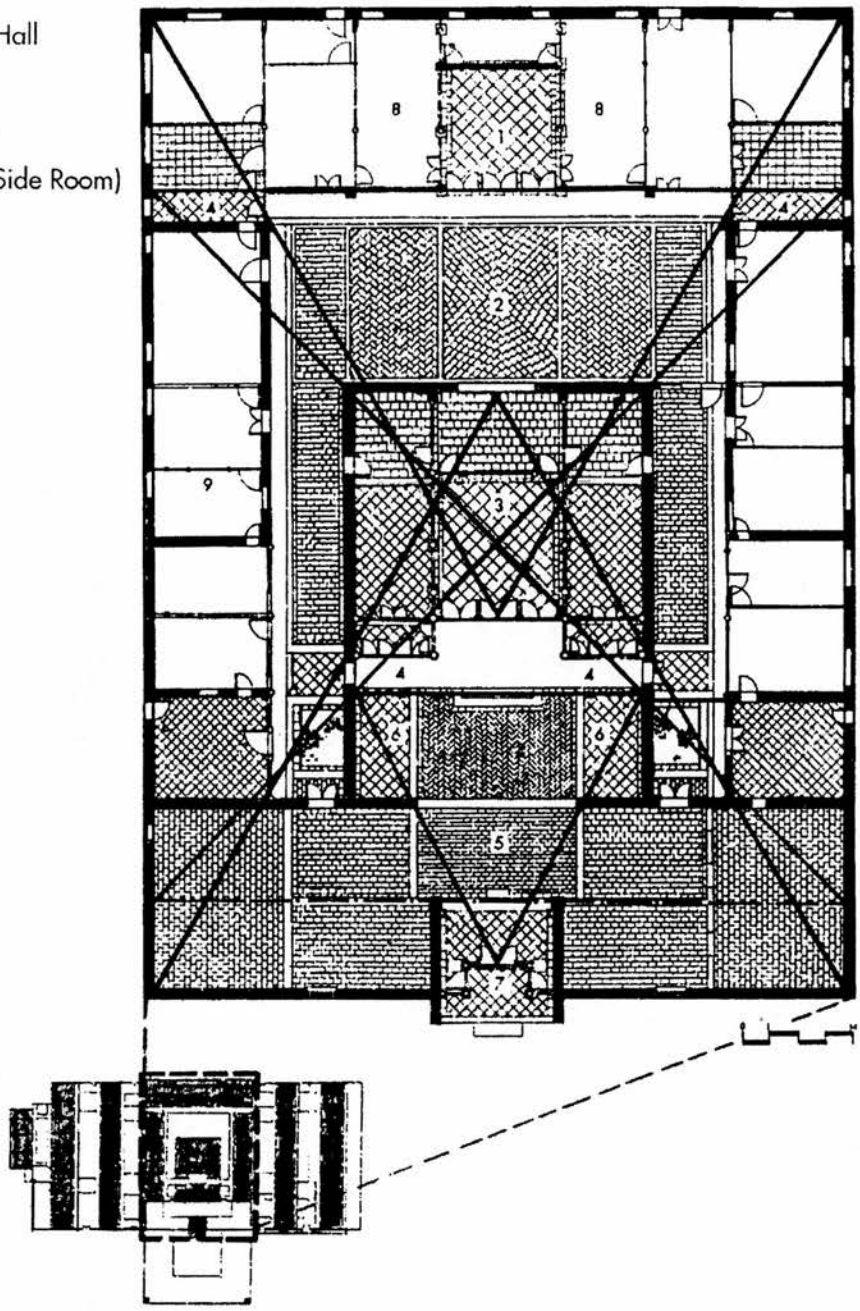
Fig. 5-5 The courtyard house of the northern branch of Chinese architecture (from The Generalisation of Chinese Architecture - Liu Tun-chun, 1957: 98)



(A-mino mansion, T'ing-tien, Chuan state)

Fig. 5-6 The courtyard house of Fujian (from The Residence of Fujian - Kao Chen-ming, 1987: 159)

1. Rear Hall
2. Rear Court
3. Main Hall
4. Descendant Alley
5. Interior Court
6. Sedan-chair Hall
7. Gate house
8. Fang (Room)
9. Hsian Fang (Side Room)



(Yi-Yuan mansion, 1846)

Fig. 5-7 The geometric relationship of plan in a Taiwan courtyard house (after b.11: 47)

The local character of architecture in Taiwan further developed and matured after the 1850s, when the Han society was more permanent and reconfirmed its traditional values, becoming, in effect, a sub-set of southern Chinese architecture. The main character of architecture in Taiwan, in general, may be summarised as follows:

1. The triad-courtyard house (三合院) was widely adopted throughout the period of immigration. A mature form was successfully developed with multi-winged houses named *hu-lung* 護龍 (the protective dragon), rarely found even in Fujian (Fig. 5-8). By contrast the quartet-courtyard house (四合院), and because of its royal character, was only used for temples, government offices and the big mansions of local gentry and the scholars who succeeded in national examination. It became a rare and specific houses form in Taiwan (Fig. 5-9). Some types, which combined the spatial characters of both the triad and the quartet courtyard house, were successfully developed as the models shown in figure 5-10. [3]

2. The street-house (街屋) in Taiwan, as shown in figure 5-11, started emerging in harbour cities in the early 19th century. There is still no evidence on its origin and the earliest date of its appearance, but there were distinct differences between this form and the earlier street-houses of inland China [4]. The typical form of the building, as shown in figure 5-13, was normally about five metres wide [5] and ten to thirty times of width in length. Usually there were three layers of buildings and two courtyards named "three *chin*s two *lo*s" 三進兩落, and two stories; both its side-walls were common used by the adjacent neighbours. Though the spaces were shared by both commerce and dwelling, its spatial order still obeyed the principle of courtyard house, and could be treated as a transformed form.

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[3] As it was the complex that showed both spatial merits and demerits of the triad and quarter courtyard houses, it is not separately discussed in later sections in the thesis.

[4] Street-houses in market towns arose on the mainland in the Sung dynasty. However, they, as they are shown in the painting "Going up-river on the eve of the Ch'ing-ming festival" (Fig. 5-12) that have shops at the front and the courtyard houses at the rear (f.25 1981: 340), were different from the linear street-houses in Taiwan. There were also a few street-houses in Ch'uan-state (Fujian) that were similar to Taiwan's, but there is no proof which was earlier.

[5] As main architectural materials had to be imported from the mainland throughout this period, five metres pre-formed timber was the most economical length for shipping and moving. It became a unique case where the division of urban land was decided by the scale of buildings' structures.(b.12 1978:. 71)

1 Basic unit
2 Typical triad courtyard house
3 Incomplete triad courtyard house
4 Chou house, Wan-hwa
5 Fan-chiang house, Hsin-wu
6 Yu-shan-kuan, Yung-ching
7 Lin house, Lung-ching
8 Ch'eng house, Taipei
9 Yang house, Shr-lin
10 Lin mansion, Ta-yu
11 Chang mansion, Hu-k'ou

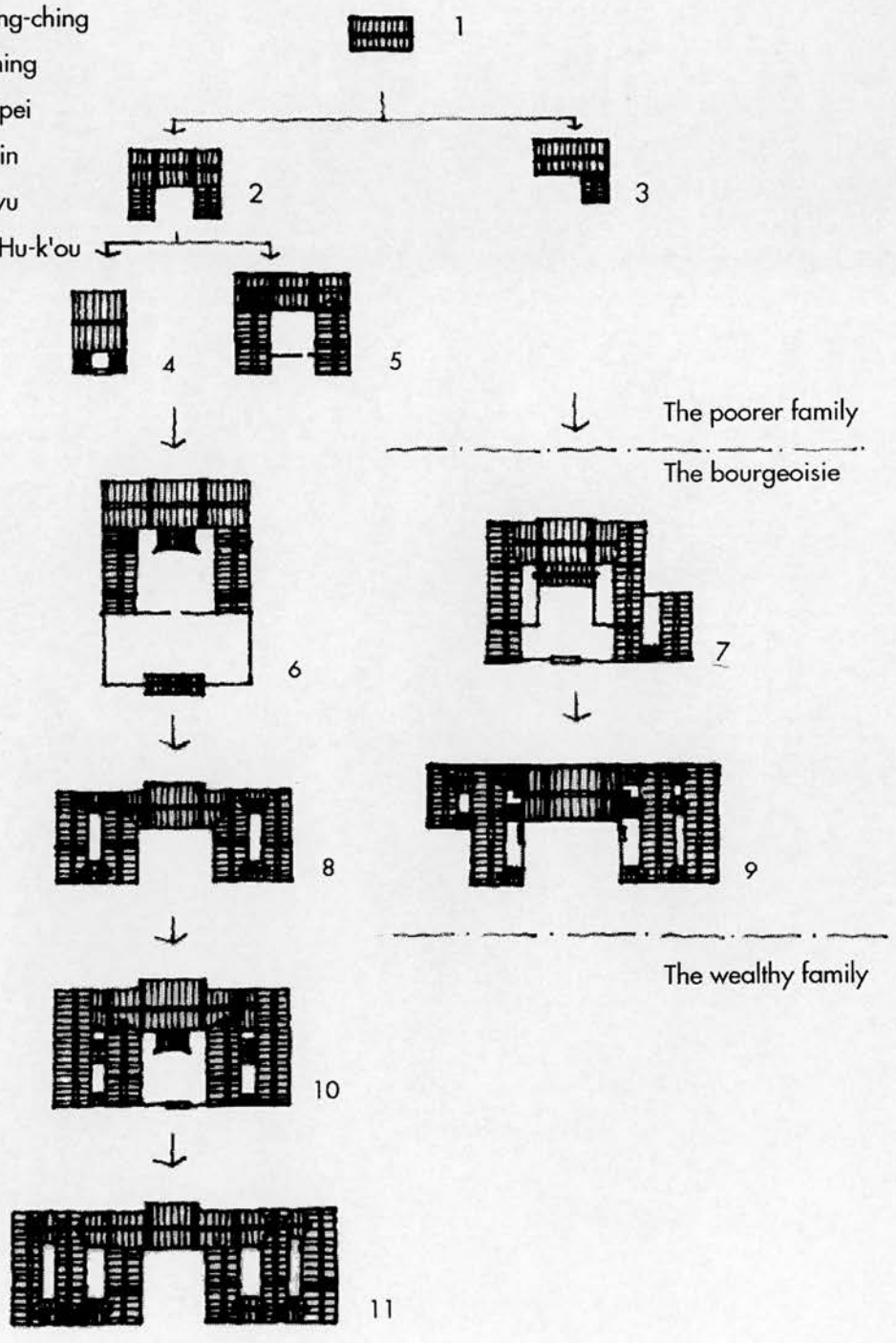


Fig. 5-8 Models of the triad-courtyard house in Taiwan (after f.22: fig. 8)

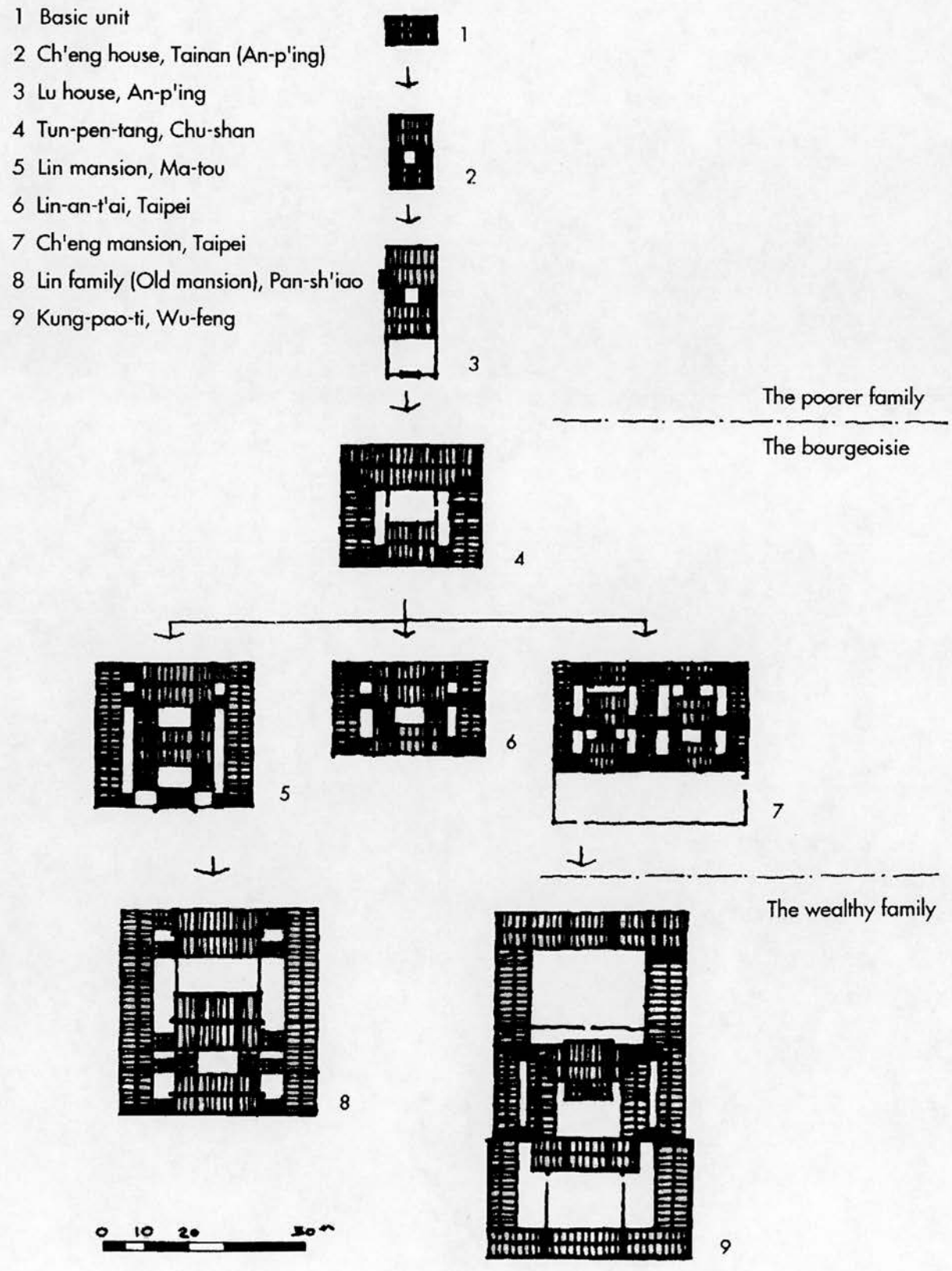


Fig. 5-9 Models of the quartet-courtyard house in Taiwan (after f.22: fig. 8)

1 Lin family (New mansion), Pan-ch'iao
2 Hsiao mansion, P'ing-tung
3 Ch'eng mansion, Hsiu-shei

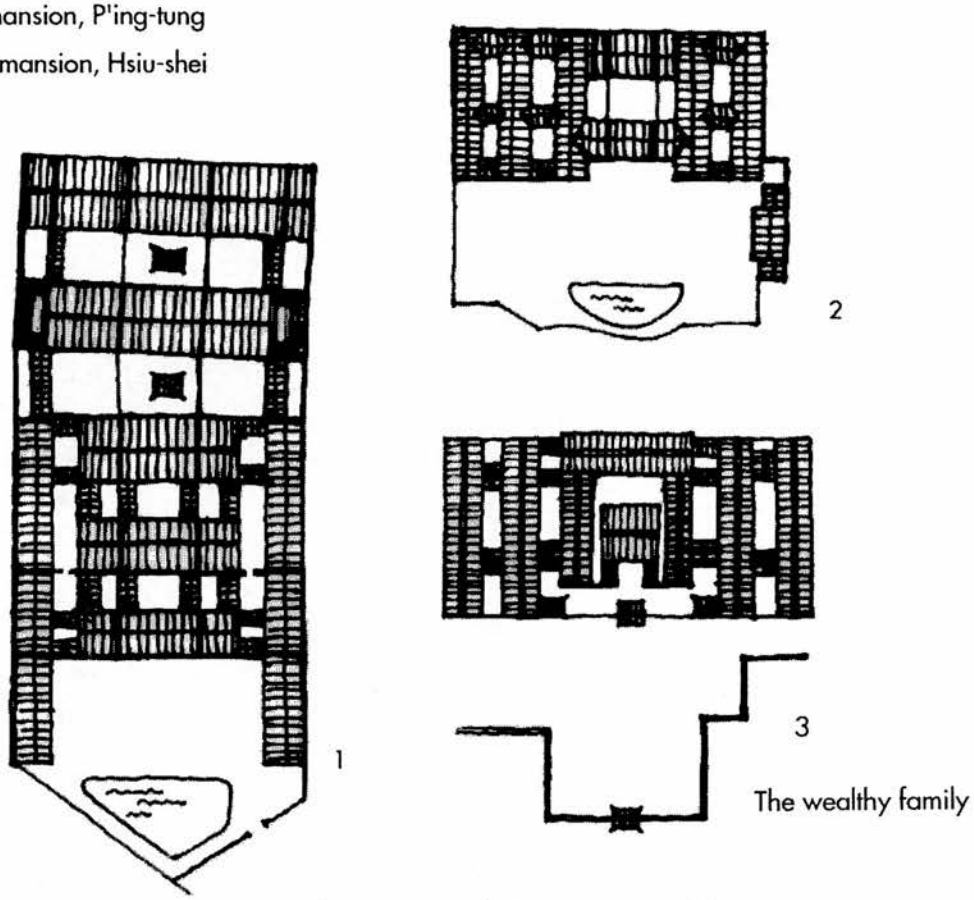


Fig. 5-10 Models of the transformation of the courtyard house in Taiwan (after f.22: fig. 8)

1 Tan-shi (Ch'ung-chien Rd)
2 Lu-kang (Chung-shan Rd)
3 Ting house, Lu-kang

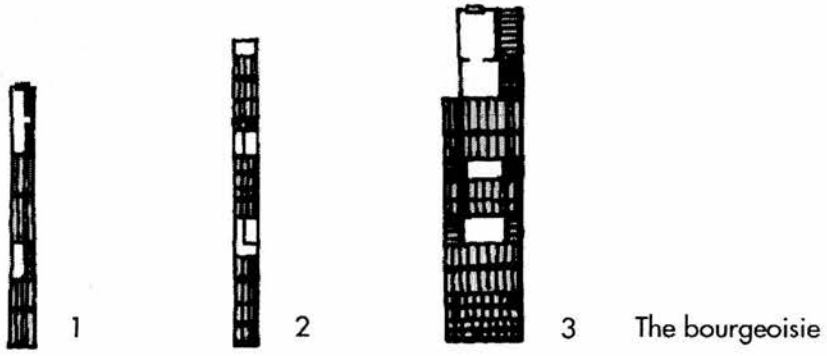


Fig. 5-11 Models of the street-house in Taiwan (after f.22: fig. 8)

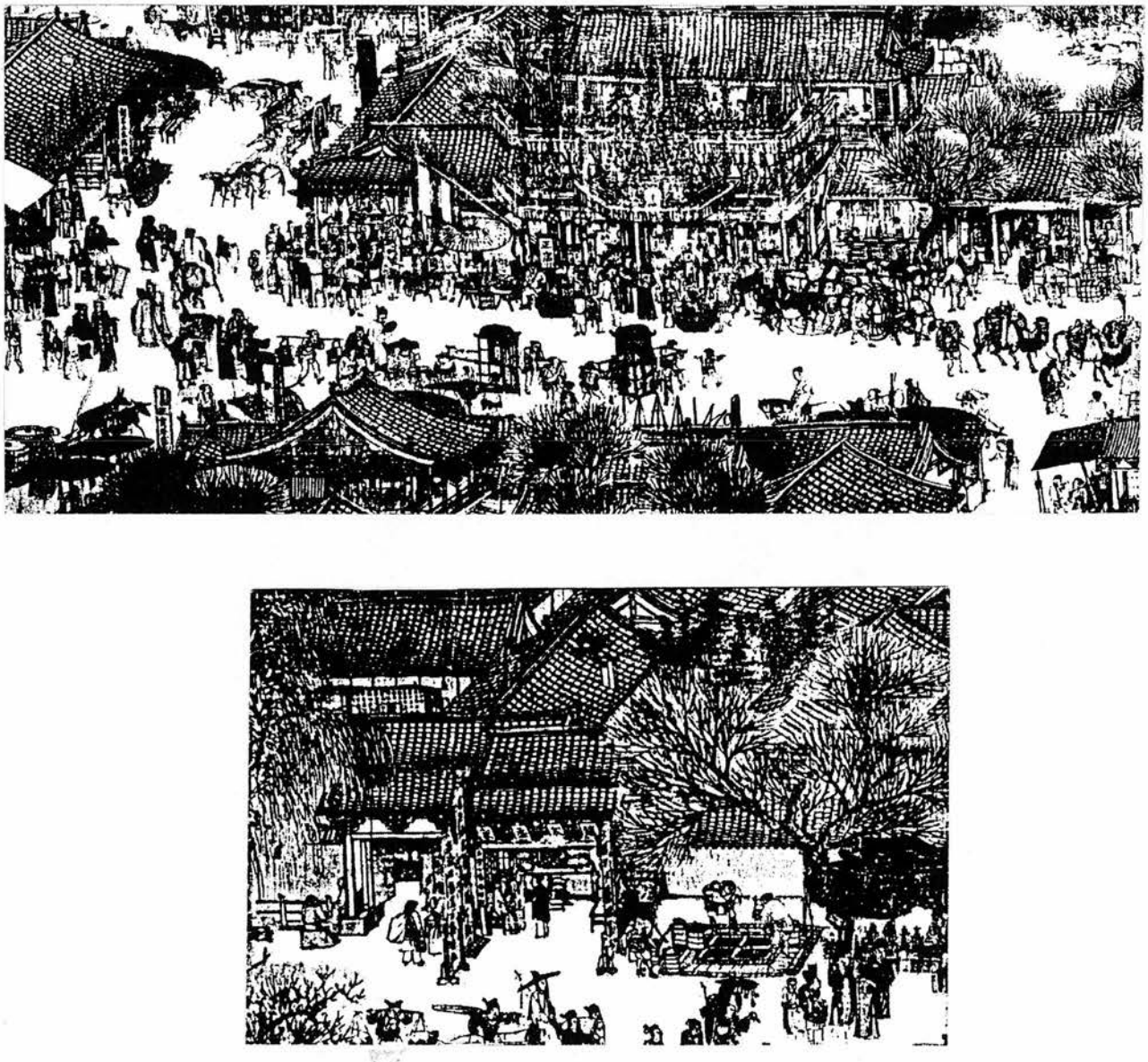
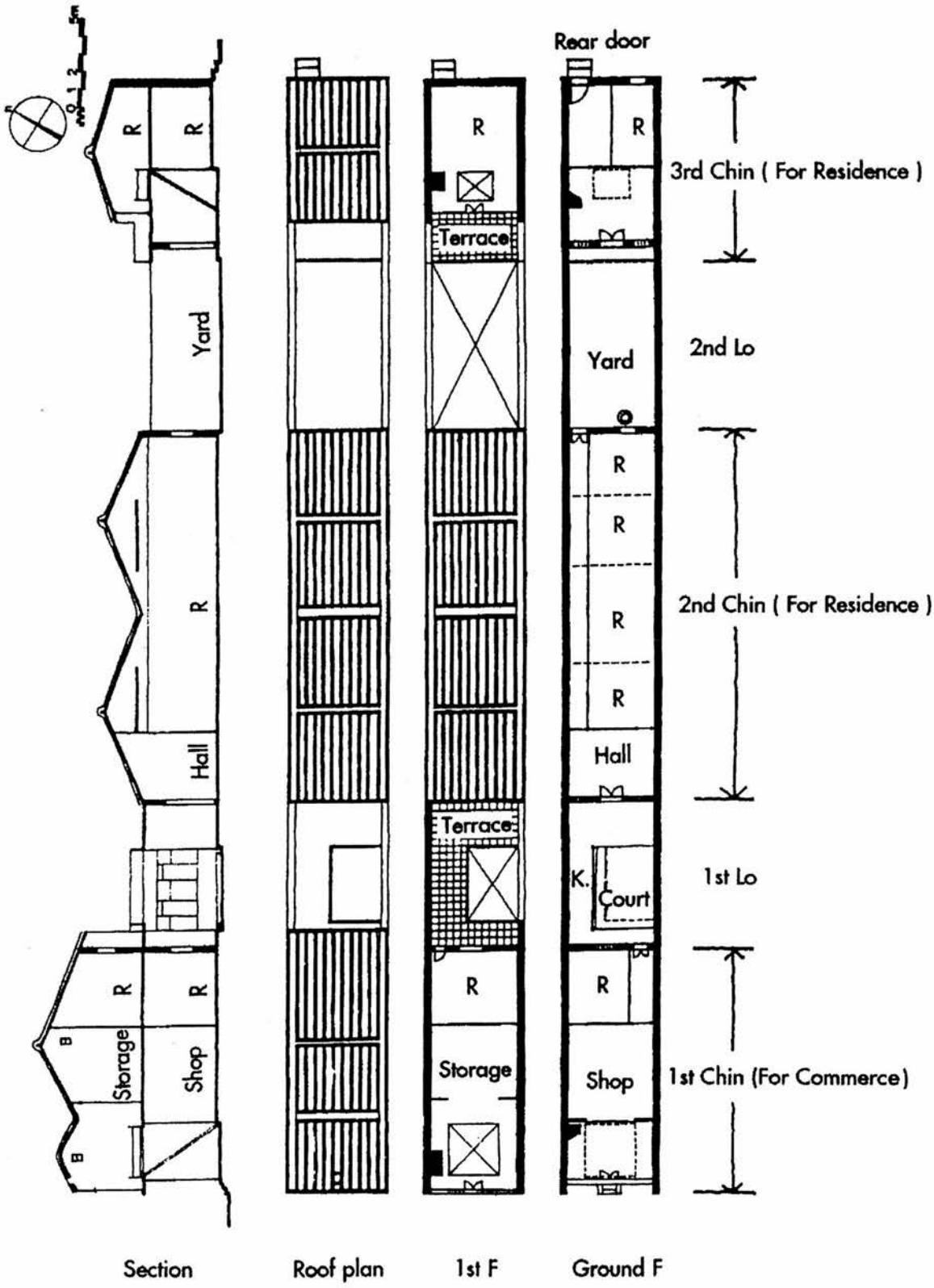


Fig. 5-12 The painting "Going up-river on the eve of the Ch'ing-ming festival" (National Palace Museum)- Northern Sung dynasty (from b.44: fig. 110-1, 112-2)



(264, Chung-shan Rd., Lu-kung, 1800 - 1850)

Fig. 5-13 The space of a street-house in Taiwan (after b.12: 65)

3. Almost all parts of a building were decorated by paintings, sculptures and relief. The attempt to create differences through detail, within a similar main framework, suggests that the basic model, derived from the Fujian original, was either too mature or too rigid to take further development.

Generally speaking, architecture in Taiwan was mature and localised after the later half of the nineteenth century. But as its values were dominated by rigid tradition, and as design and construction practice was controlled by social norms and *feng-shui* principles, houses in immigrant Taiwan, like any other characterised architecture in mainland China, never departed far from the original concepts associated with the ancient and prototypical forms. The consequence was that, irrespective of whether a house was built for the rich or the poor, its spatial order and meaning could be clearly understood by reference to the same set of traditional values and principles.

5-3 The spatial organisation of the traditional house in Taiwan

The spatial order of a courtyard house in Taiwan was totally determined by two-dimensional axes of the plan. The central axis of ordinate, as the example shows in figure 5-14, was the most important for the house. This axis expressed the orientation of the front facade and was the line upon which all ritual spaces must be located. The axis of abscissa decided the relative spatial significance of all other non-ritual space by their distance off the central axis (or the main hall) and the sides [6]. Though a subsidiary system, it had an important influence on spatial order.

The spatial organisation was such, as figure 5-15 shows, that the point of intersection between the main axes of ordinate and abscissa defined the location of the main hall and was the "noblest" place in the whole group of the house. All areas before the main abscissa axis were exterior spaces for male family, guests and servants, the area after this axis was identified as interior space for female family members and for all young children.

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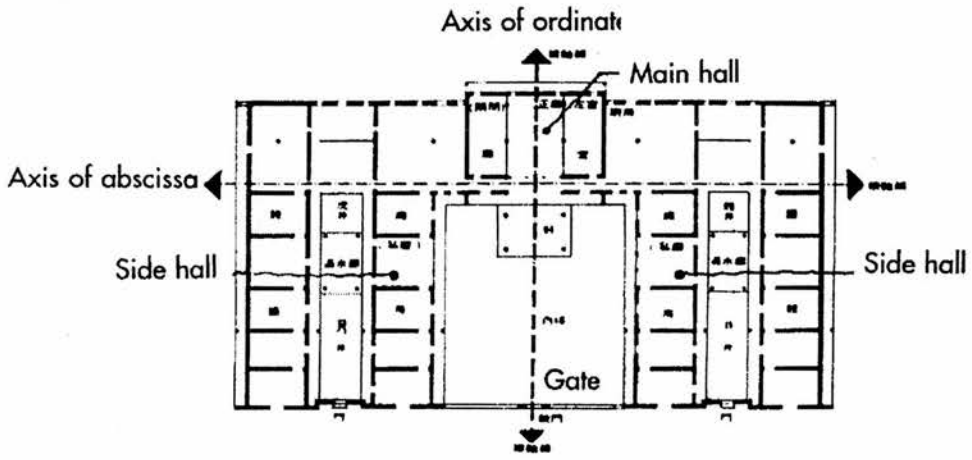
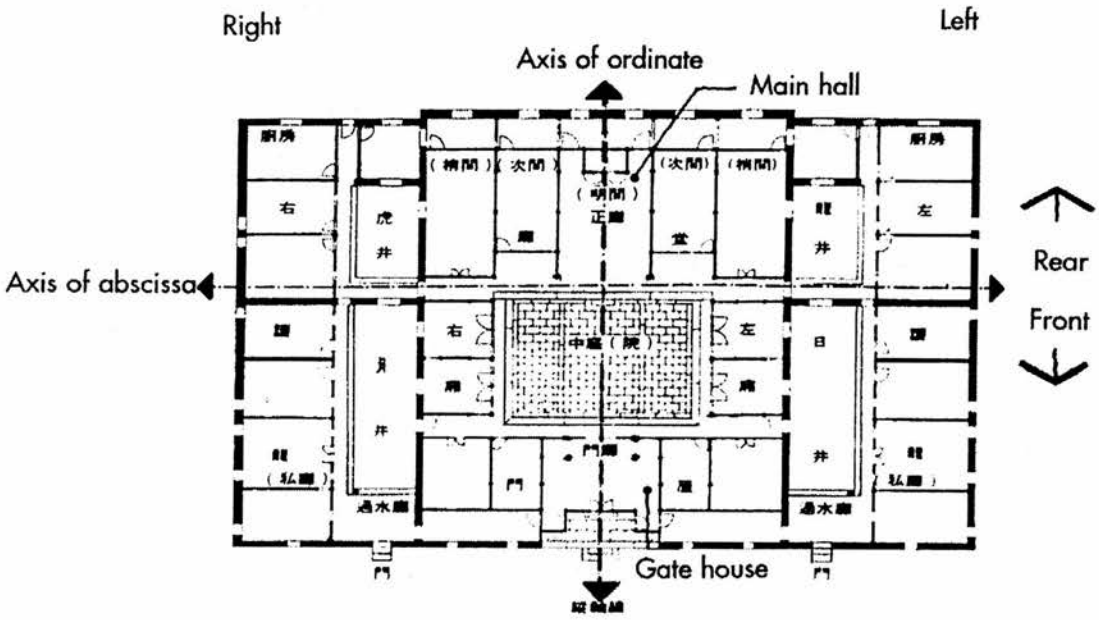
6 In Chinese terns, stage left and stage right are meant here throughout.



(Lin house, Ta-li, 1888)



(Lin-an-tai mansion, Taipei, 1822)

Fig. 5-14 The axes of the courtyard house (after b.10: 24, 26)

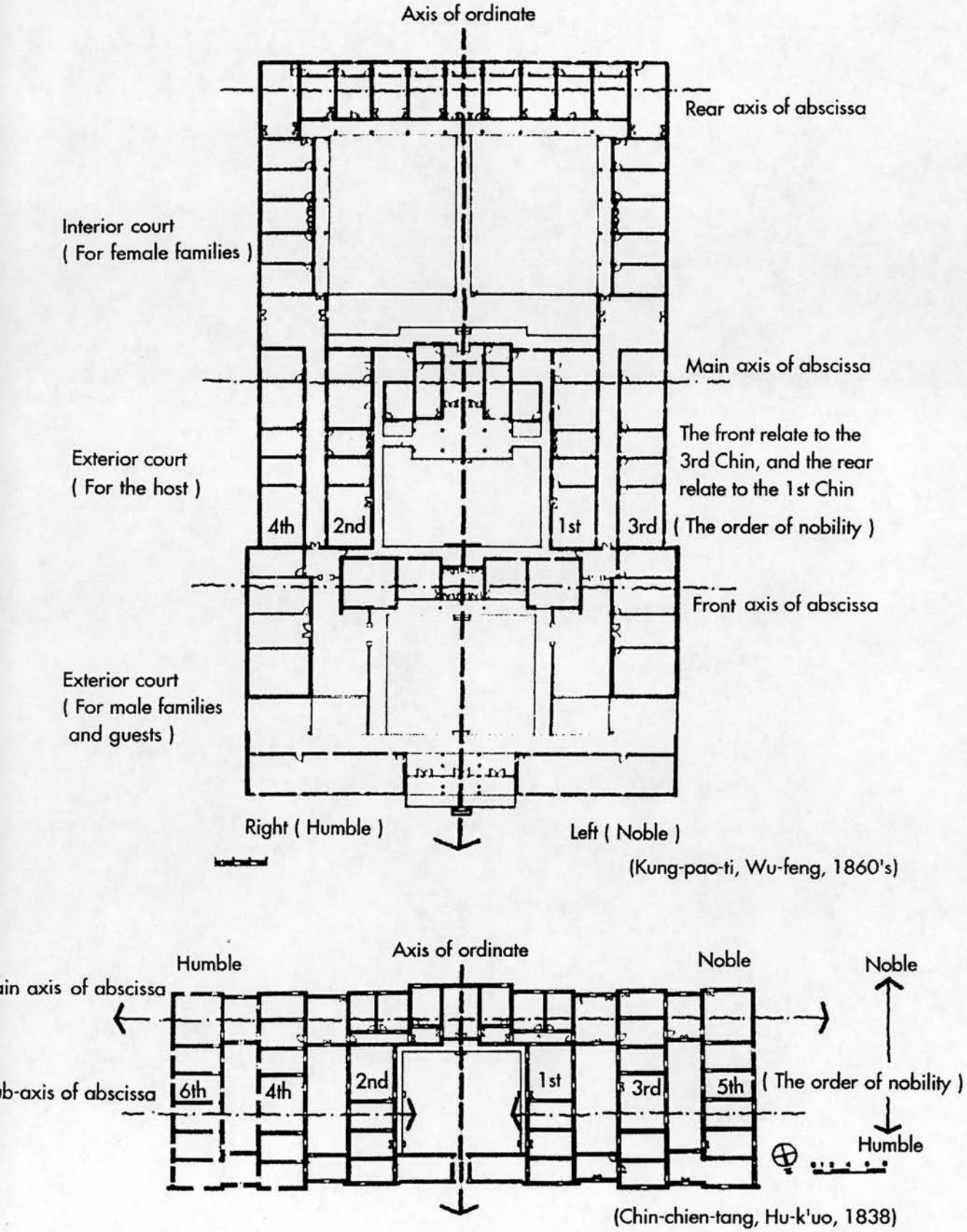


Fig. 5-15 The spatial order in a courtyard house (after b.21: 85, 82)

The main principles underlying the spatial order were as follows: Parts of the building on (i) the left-hand side (ii) to the rear and (iii) near to the centre had a nobler spatial position, whilst parts of the building (i) on the right hand side (ii) to the front and (iii) away from the centre were of humbler status. But the more precise rule of spatial order was that each space was comparable only with another within the same courtyard group. Thus whilst the interior space was basically inferior to the main hall, it compared in no way to any of the exterior spaces. This spatial division suggested that the domestic relationship of the family was clearly separated into two sub-system: one for all male family members who lived in the exterior court and were directly subjugated to the father; one for the female family members who lived in the interior court, directly subjugated to the mother, and only indirectly managed by the father. The activities of people in the interior spaces were independent of those of people in the exterior court. However this principle became confused when considering the positioning of spaces at the corners. Such space was in a very ambivalent position because it could be regarded as the building on both the ordinate (the last building of that ordinate in the court) and the abscissa (under the same structure of roof with all others on the same abscissa). Furthermore it had no frontage. It, therefore, was cleverly used as service space (e.g. kitchen or storage) which avoided the difficulty to identify it with one section of the family or another. Furthermore, the left-hand side building was always built first in case the budget was insufficient for both sides, or in case the space of one side proved sufficient for the needs of the whole family, as shown in Fig. 5-8 (3, 7, 9).

Figure 5-14 shows that a triad-courtyard house with multi-sided houses had its main hall at the centre, and symmetrically reproduces its groups of side houses on each side at regular intervals along the main axis of abscissa. Each group of side houses has a private hall 私廳 (or side hall, the assistant space of the main hall), the line connecting all them was the sub-axis of abscissa pointing to the main plaza. Because it had no second layer of building to clearly show the central axis of ordinate, the central axis of ordinate here only expressed the facing of the house decided by *feng-shui*. And since there was only one clearly symbolic centre, the two wings, theoretically, could be endlessly expanded without causing confusion regarding the spatial centre as figure 5-16 shows. This became a very

successful organic model for a greatly expansive family. Also, as each group of side houses was very easily and clearly divided into independent units, it perfectly matched the need of *fen-fang*.

The quartet-courtyard house was basically composed of several courtyards with buildings organised along the central axis of ordinate. The main hall was located at the point of intersection of two main axes which was normally also virtually the geometric centre of the whole house as well. Several other halls with different functions were also set in front of or behind the main hall on the same central axis of ordinate. Since the order of such ritual spaces was rigidly fixed by domestic human relationships, all those spaces had to be completely decided at the first stage of the construction. That meant that the site plan itself had to be rigidly determined and might be impossible to change in later years. Then the only way of solving the problem of increasing family members was to build another new group of houses, with a new parallel semi-axis of ordinate, alongside the original, as in the example of the Lin family at Wu-feng (Fig. 5-17). Additionally, as all big quartet-courtyard houses were built by successful local gentry or government officials, who normally emphasised traditional values and would have no place in their minds for the prosperous lineage being divided by their having no promising descendants in the future. The space planning of quartet-courtyard houses were quite different from the triad-courtyard house which allowed for the possibility of clear division for *fang-fen* (*fang*'s share), the former being much more introverted and indivisible.

The spatial organisation of the long street-house was a composite model which combined traditional spatial concepts with practical living patterns and may be considered as a transformation of the traditional courtyard house. It had unique features, however, especially in the arrangement of spatial use for its new domestic functions. The axis of abscissa had less meaning there, because the width of most typical street-houses would not allow for three spans. The example of the Din house, as Fig. 5-18 shows, was a unique case which was made up by three houses for three brothers. For this reason there was less concern to have the front door at the centre or left-hand side of the facade (though according to local *feng-shui* it should not be at the right-hand side as this was the side for death), or even wholly open to the street for convenient retailing.

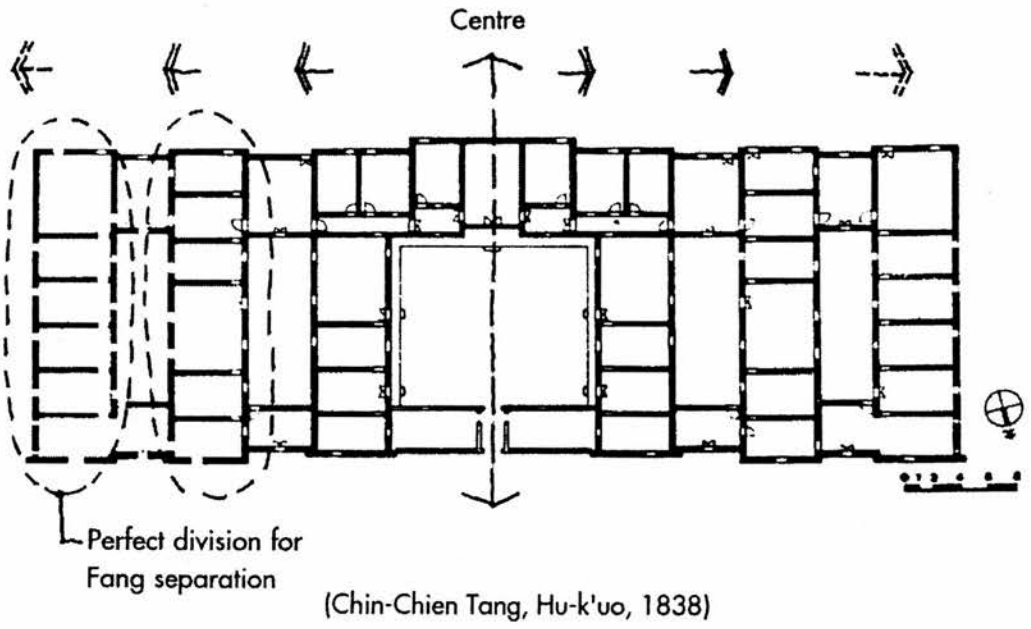


Fig. 5-16 The expansion of a triad-courtyard house (after b.10)

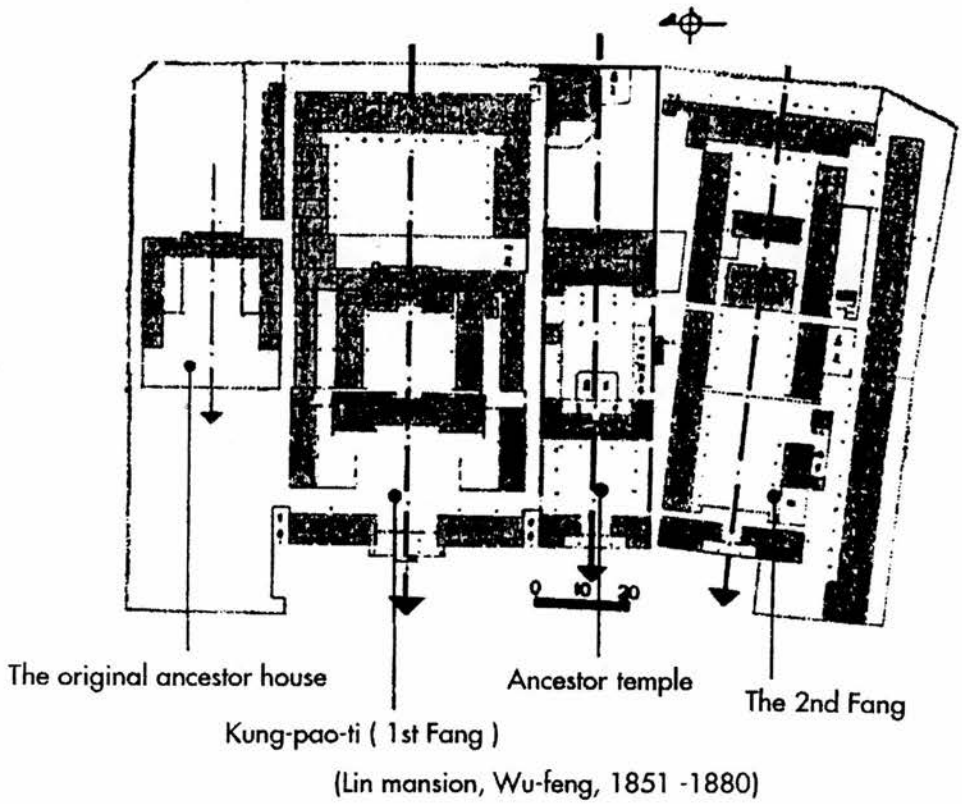
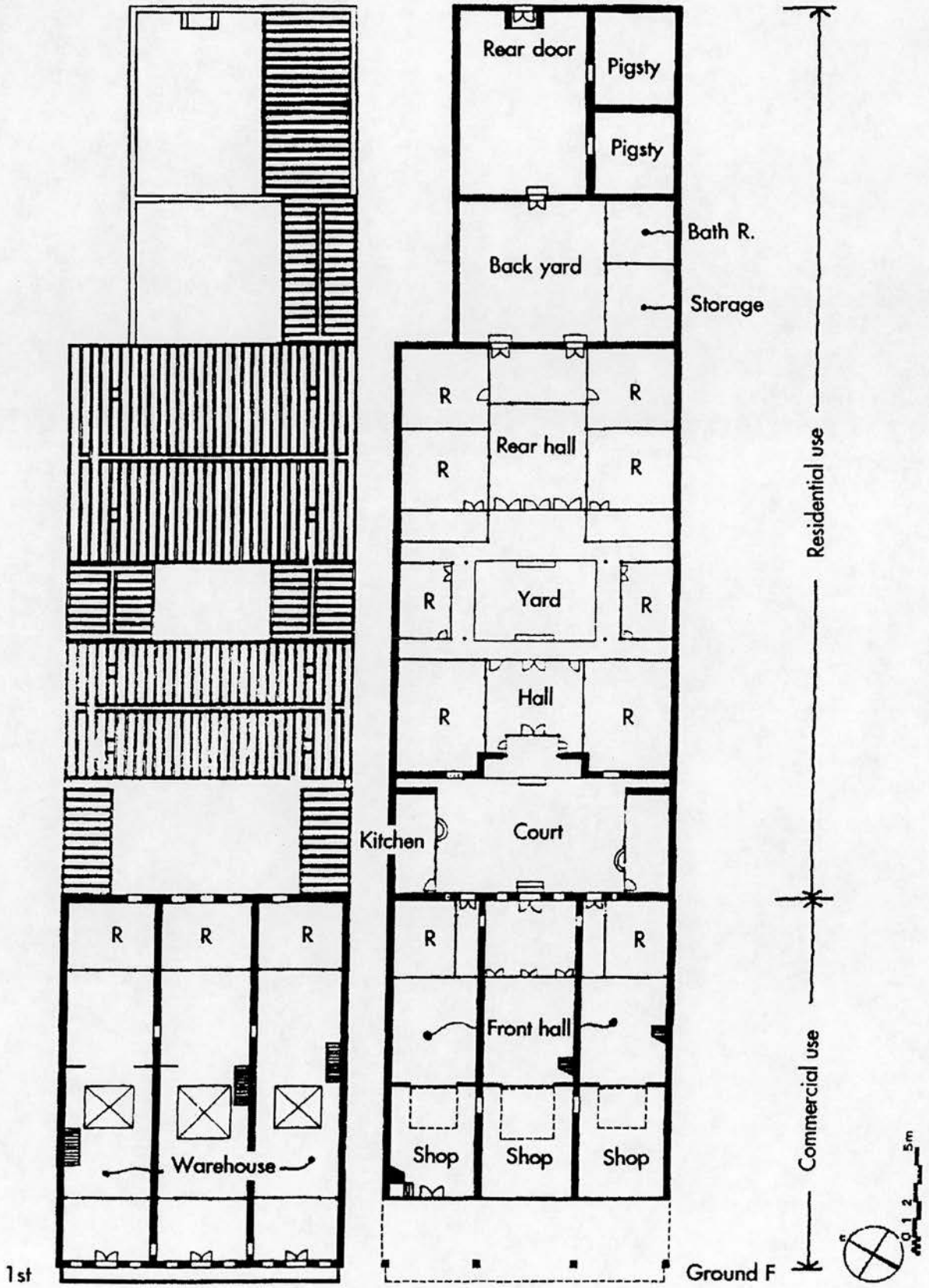


Fig. 5-17 The expansion of a quartet-courtyard house (after b.21)



Din house (No. 130, 132, 134, Shung-shan Rd., Lu-kung, 1800 - 1850)

Fig 5-18 The spatial organisation of the street-house (from b.12: 68)

However it could, theoretically, spread its space lengthwise and upwards along the ordinate without limit. The plan of the front *chin* was normally longer in length than the others for the sake of business: its ground floor was arranged to meet the retail requirements of a shop. In here the god of business (each business was protected by one specific god named *chu-shi-yeh*), instead of the penates (*chia-shen*, the gods worshipped in the house), was worshipped. The room for business guests was arranged behind the shop; commonly the host's room was also set in this *chin* for direct business control. The warehouse on the first floor was set above the shop, with a big void above the centre of the shop and a steep staircase on one side for transportation. The first courtyard was the main space for daily service: the kitchen was set on either side with the corridor to the rear; the well was also set in its opening area, and sometimes it was shared with the adjacent neighbour. The second *chin* could be for both the staff and children when there was no third *chin*; this *chin* would be treated as interior space and was reserved for family members. The god of the family and of the ancestors were worshipped here as well. The old parents would stay in the last *chin*, and the bathroom would be set in either the second or the third courtyard. The back yard, which did not apparently exist in the traditional courtyard house but was very common and clearly bordered in the street-house, was used as the area linking up with the back alley for service circulation, and the space for domestic animals. The first floor at second or both the second and the third *chin* were the space for only the female family members.

In summary, the spatial organisation of the traditional house in Taiwan was characterised as follows: (a) All domestic spaces were tightly fitted next to each other. (b) The spatial position was very clear in terms of the relative significance of the spaces, defined in terms of master and subordinate domestic relationship. (c) The courtyard was treated as the centre of the spatial organisation, even in the case of the street-house. (d) The axis for all ritual halls was the spine for further development of the whole spatial organisation. And (e) The principle of the domestic spatial organisation was rigid and universal.

5-4 Spatial notions raised by the values of patriarchy

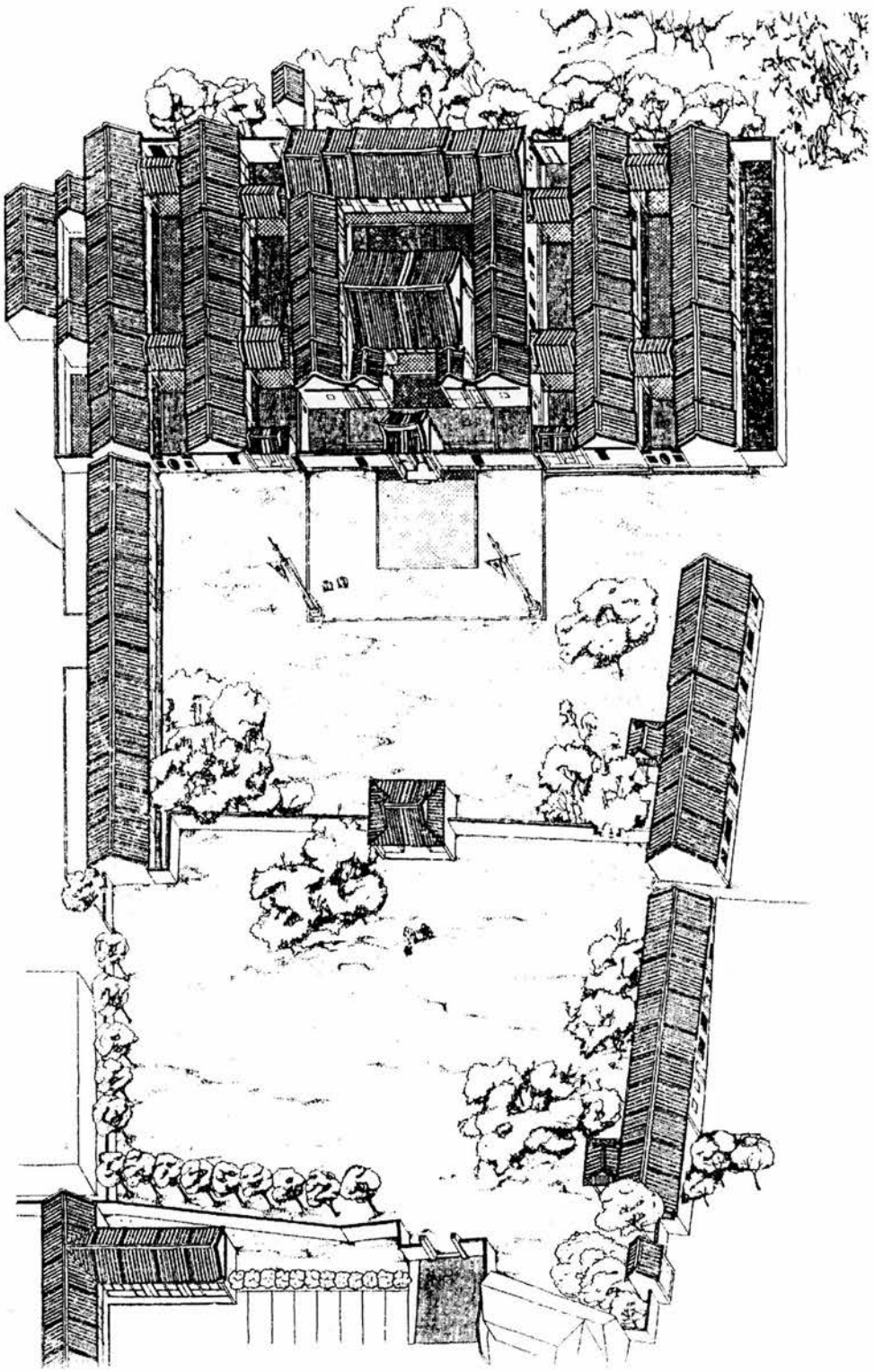
5-4.1 "Greatness" and scale

It was evident that the Chinese devoted much more attention to the spatial notion of "greatness" than size (b.30 1984: 164). The size of the building was relative to the host's status and social position; measurements were decided by the principles of *feng-shui* and by the taboos of the construction. In the case of the grandiose palace at Beijing and the wooden pagoda (67.31 m high) at Yin county, Shan-hsi (A.D. 1056 - b.44 1980: 201), construction would be much less limited by materials or technique.

Yet the notion of "greatness", to the Chinese, was associated with ideology, ritual, and symbolism, and concerned more with contents than with physical scale. As the Chinese believed that all one's effort and achievements were for the prosperity of the lineage rather than for one's present glory or a better after life; house design was thus concerned much more with the extent to which buildings revealed something about the number of descendants and indicated the extent of a lineage's prosperity. Therefore, the site plan which incorporated a great number of buildings in one group was considered more significant than the size of any single building. (Fig. 5-19)

5-4.2 Immortality and the life cycle

Though Taoism and ancient legend suggested that the Chinese still desired long life or an undying body, the Chinese were fundamentally a secular, fatalistic and practical people who respected the natural law of life and death, and believed in "nowadays". Also, the Chinese notion of time was circular. Every sixty years, which was almost a person's lifetime in those times, was viewed as a "circuit" where all fate restarted from the beginning (cf. footnote 12). Therefore, nothing was considered to be forever. This included architecture which was treated simply as a container for the present life. Such an ideology was expressed also by the Chinese preference for wood as one of the main material of architecture, though the techniques of stonework had been developed from very early times (b.28 1985: 131). On the other hand, the Chinese cared deeply about



(Yi-yuan mansion, Chang-hwa, 1846)

Fig. 5-19 Great number of buildings in one group for a house (after b.11: 170)

immortality and paid a lot of attention to this idea by adopting the value of the endless continuity of the line of descent.

The association of architectural concepts and the immortality related both to the lifetime of the house and to the host. Usually a wooden structure could last about twenty to thirty years (the durability of architectural material in Taiwan could be reduced to about twenty years owing to the influence of earthquakes, high humidity, and termites). That meant that the alternation of the generations perfectly - if coincidentally - matched the lifetime of the house. Constant repair thus became one of the most important rites in the continuance of the lineage. The condition of buildings became the only physical social symbol and index of the host's achievement, and the prosperity of the lineage for which he was responsible [7]. That was why the Chinese, despite the demands of *feng-shui*, tended to re-build a completely new mansion instead of repairing the old historical building, and only tablets and important brushwork which concerned the glorious history of the lineage would be kept at prominent positions in a new building to prove its lineage connections and the spiritual immortality of the lineage. The notion of Chinese immortality expressed through architecture thus was not physical or monumental but symbolic, humanistic, and concerned only the host.

5-4.3 **Nothing is for everything**

Chinese philosophy tended to adopt the attitude of "doing nothing to react to all changing things". The attitude was extended to the architectural concept that each space must keep itself highly flexible, neutral, and uncertain in function for the sake of fitting in all the different functional demands in a house. The simple model of a rectangular plan without any internal partitions, was adopted as the basic spatial unit for all kinds of use. It reflected an ancient Chinese wisdom of life that "nothing is for everything". (Lao-tzu, chapter 11 - the Chou dynasty).

This spatial idea of non-functionalism may be said to result from the

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[7] To the Chinese, "shining the lintel" 光耀門楣 was synonymous with one's achieving something, and only the descendant who was assumed to have achieved nothing would stay in the ancestor's old house and shamefully wait for its collapse.

Chinese view of the world in which the Chinese usually considered things holistically and as part of a continuous sequence rather than focusing on each single issue or unique subject individually (b.30 1984:162). In other words, in Chinese logic there is only a forest but no single trees. Architecturally, the Chinese traditionally conceived of buildings and parts of buildings as a group, rather than separately room by room. The function and the position of any single space, similar in shape and size to any others in a group, had specific identity only after it was located at a certain place within the group in a particular house.

Spatial relationships were also probably associated with the values of patriarchy. All family members were positioned in a particular space according to their relationship with the father, and each space was positioned, according to its relationship with the main hall which was the exclusive space for the father. The roles and positions of family members relative to the father were alterable owing to the changing structure of the family, resulted from the concubinage, new matrimony, and *fen-fang* etc. To have a most flexible availability of space under rigid spatial organisation to cope with unpredictable organic development, thus, could be the most efficient and convenient model for this father-centred structure.

5-4.4 **The relationship with nature**

Dr. Han Pao-te argued that "...the essence of Chinese attitude towards spatial identification was artificial, because their complex about nature was humanistic. Nature satisfies only the needs of life..." (f.31: 588). Nature, to the Chinese, could be accepted and appreciated only when it was clearly separated from people at a proper distance with a clear boundary and under a proper measure of control [8]. "Wild" nature, was believed to be a potential threat to the safety of life, and as such was unthinkable and had to be avoided. This may be one of the important reasons why the Chinese traditional house always insisted on its heavy exterior wall to isolate itself from the outside environment even in country areas.

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8 This was even no exception to the family garden where the visitors' paths and viewpoints were decided by the designer from the beginning; the stone edges of the path, the rocky bank of the pond, and the green hedges, were all used as bounds between "nature" and people.

One another reason why "nature" was excluded from the Chinese house might result from one origin of the courtyard house of *great-she* which was completely dignified, ritual, authoritative, and centralistic (cf. section 5-1). In order to preserve these characteristics, the house had to be rigidly symmetrical and the site geometrically arranged. Natural objects that could soften this masculine character were rejected which is why even potted trees were normally limited to the minimum in a traditional Chinese house.

The family garden, the ideas of which were mainly derived from the cosmology and environmental notions of the category of the reclusive scholars (b.20 1984: preface-p.6), may be one of the proudest achievements of southern traditional Chinese architecture, but it was totally different from orthodox architectural principles, and was simply a place of recreation and not for daily life. Women especially were excluded from such gardens (cf. section 7-4.1). Despite the great importance of the garden it was completely bounded by walls, which made it a totally independent unit rather than a integral part of the house, as the family garden of Lin family illustrates in figure 5-20. The patrifocal spatial organisation of the house was not challenged [9].

5-5 Feng-shui and the Household-head

Chinese cosmology developed into two main systems: the system of ceremonial forms which became the orthodoxy and dominates almost all the behaviour of Chinese lives in the present, and the system of *feng-shui* (風水 the wind-water) which combined with the notions of time, space and human beings, dominated Chinese thought about the future. Though the detail of *feng-shui* is not the intention of this study, its idea have to be considered in the present context because it represents one of the most

[9] This may be based on a dual contradiction: The Chinese, on the one hand, adhered only to the orthodox and strictly restrained themselves; on the other, they silently accepted the anti-orthodox and enjoyed themselves to escape the pressure from orthodox. This idea is clearly demonstrated in the attitude towards women (good and bad women, wife and concubine), and the relationship between the house and the family garden.

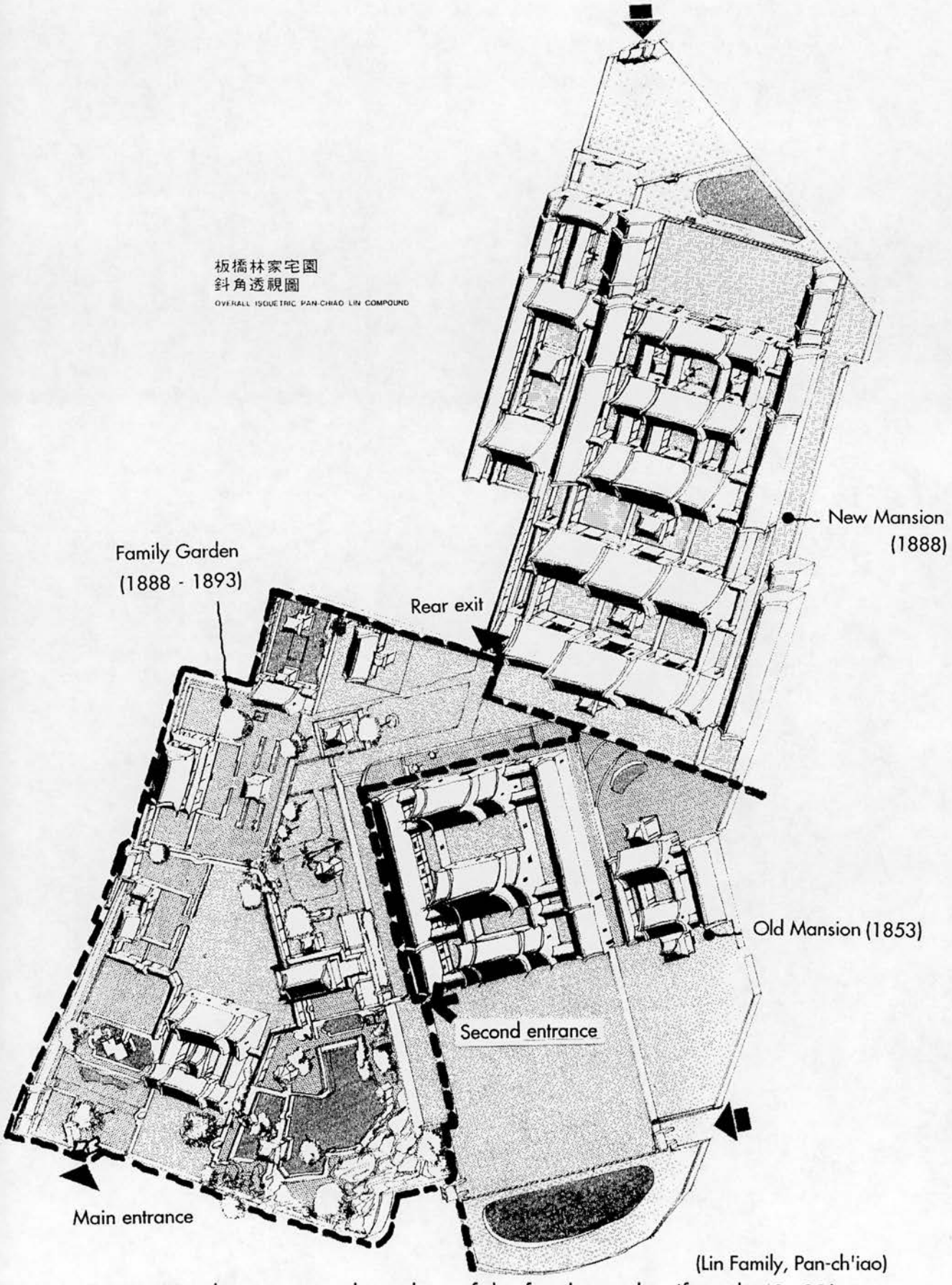

Fig. 5-20 The geometric boundary of the family garden (from b.40: 31)

important Chinese attitudes towards nature and the environment, and was one of the most important initial considerations of architectural design to the Chinese. It provided a significant but rarely discussed support for the values of fatherhood expressed in architecture.

In brief, *feng-shui* was a mysterious pseudo-science, a technique for utilising the energy of nature to develop a human being's good fortune by finding a good *hsueh* (point) 穴 and trapping good *ch'i* (air) 氣. The earliest records about *feng-shui* concerned the knowledge of the "physiognomy of the house" 相宅術 before the Qin dynasty 前秦. It started from the ancient notion of *yin-yang*, and was not at first associated with the *wu-hsing*, but they later merged to become a single complete theory of *feng-shui* in the work of Chou Yen 鄒衍 in the era of the Warring-states 戰國 (about A.D. 400) (f.33 1975: 39). Since its over-emphasis had been criticised by the scholars in the Western-Han 西漢 period (A.D. 206 - B.C. 25), the practice of *feng-shui* is believed to have already been well developed before that time (f.30 1983:126). The study of *feng-shui* saw a new stage of development in the late Sung dynasty 宋. At this time the theory based on the classical *wu-yin* (five-sound) 五音 [10] was formally divided into the theory of *hsing-chia* (land-form) 行家 (Fig. 5-21) and *li-ch'i* (orientation) 理氣 (Fig. 5-22). However *li-ch'i* kept on dividing into more profound theories of arithmetic whilst *hsing-chia* was commonly accepted by *feng-shui* professionals in later years. *Feng-shui* developed to become extremely complicated, abstruse, and clouded by superstition in the late Ming dynasty, and reached its peak in the Ch'ing dynasty. Dr. Han Pao-te maintains that "...not only was *feng-shui* the principle of Chinese architecture, but also the *feng-shui* master was the real Chinese architect after the Ming dynasty..." (f.30 1983:124).

From the "human-centre" view of the Chinese, all natural objects, as Fig. 5-23 illustrates, were regarded as furniture for the service of human being. And as *feng-shui* could only be passively compromised but not actively changed by human force, as with the ancestral *yin-chai* (grave),

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10 After the Tang dynasty, the *wu-yin* theory, based on *wu-hsing*, was not used in the field of *yang-chai* (house), but was still popular in the field of *yin-chai* (grave), especially in deciding the royal graves. It was completely abandoned after the "land-form" became popular. (f.33 1975: 42)

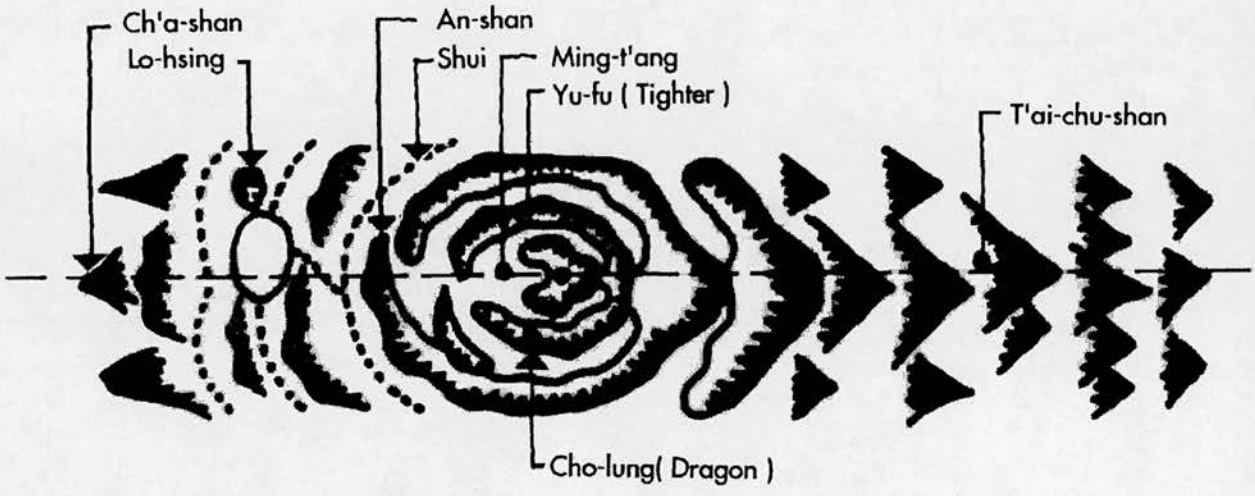
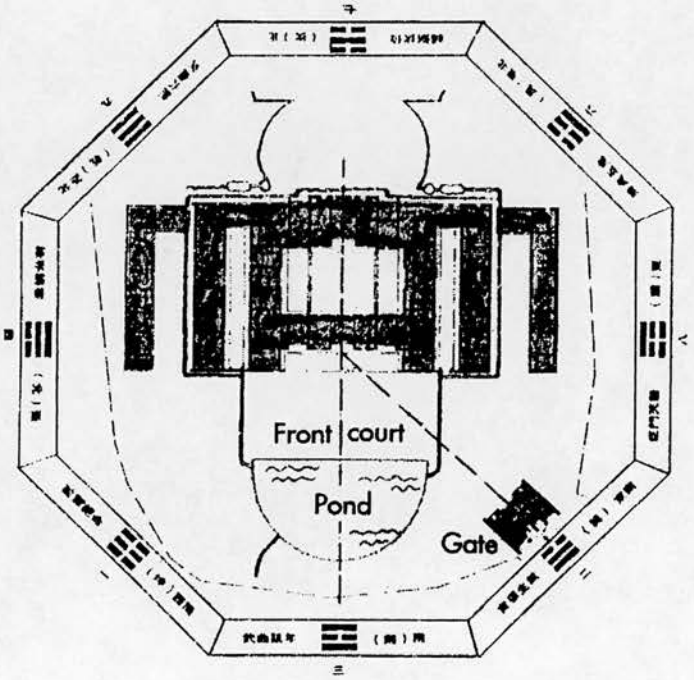


Fig. 5-21 The *feng-shui* principle of the *land-form* (after b.45 - fig. 5 - 76)



(Chai-hsing villa, Tai-chung, 1847 - 1877)

Fig. 5-22 The *feng-shui* principle of the *orientation* (from b.10: 14)

a person had to choose carefully a good *hsueh* for his house in order to get the best luck. The *hsueh*, the "navel" of the site [11], was also known as the flower pistil symbolising the flourishing of the family in some *feng-shui* theories (f.30 1983: 124). The house, the form of the triad-courtyard house being an especially obvious example, was built to have petals (*hu-lung*) to protect the *xue* (the source of life) and to capture the *ch'i* (the source of prosperity) [12]. Any family could get good luck and vitality from the power of nature only by the media of good *feng-shui* of both *yang-chai* (the nourishment given from the house) and *yin-chai* (blessing from a peaceful ancestor), and not because of human effort.

However, compared with the limited lifetime and more changeable fate of a human being, the conditions of natural geography and the artificial environments of architecture were more permanent and steady. The notion of time, known as *jih-fa* 日法 (calendrical method), therefore became a very important principle for making up the "defect" of the deterministic theories of causation of *feng-shui* that could not guarantee good luck forever in reality. It was uncertain exactly when the *jih-fa* began to play a formal and important role in the principle of *feng-shui*, but it would, according to circumstantial evidence, have been no later than the Sui dynasty 隋 (f.30 1983:142).

The theory of *jih-fa* is based on the traditional notion of circulating time, and argued that one's fate would be changed with time on an

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11 The point, depending on the different opinions from different branches of *feng-shui*, could be at the centre of the front court, the centre of the whole house, the centre in front of the main hall, or the place of the ancestral tablet.

12 However, I don't agree with Dr. Kuan Hwa-shan who concretises the form of houses as human figure as Fig. 5-24 shows (f.21 1980). First of all, there is no evidence to show that the traditional Chinese house had ever been conceived of as a human body but only as the vessel had ever been described in ancient works, the only associated case in both form and space of the house could be the *lu-pa-shr* (the form of ladle's handle - Fig. 5-8.3) was also customary named as *tan-shen-sou* (stretch-one-hand). Secondly, it would be very unreasonable (and there is no direct proof either) to have totally different understanding from the environmental ideas of the *yin-chai* that evidently had never been conceived of as a human body. Thirdly, the courtyard house was originated from the *great-she* - the ritual space developed for communicating with gods, it hence could hardly have association with the idea of anthropomorphism.

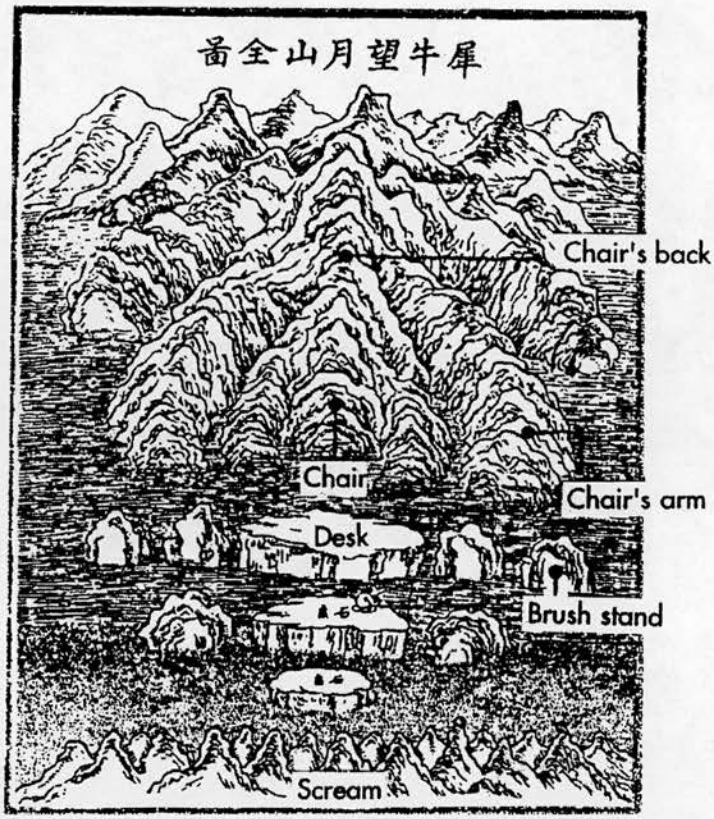

Fig. 5-23 Nature represented as furniture (from c.2: 118)

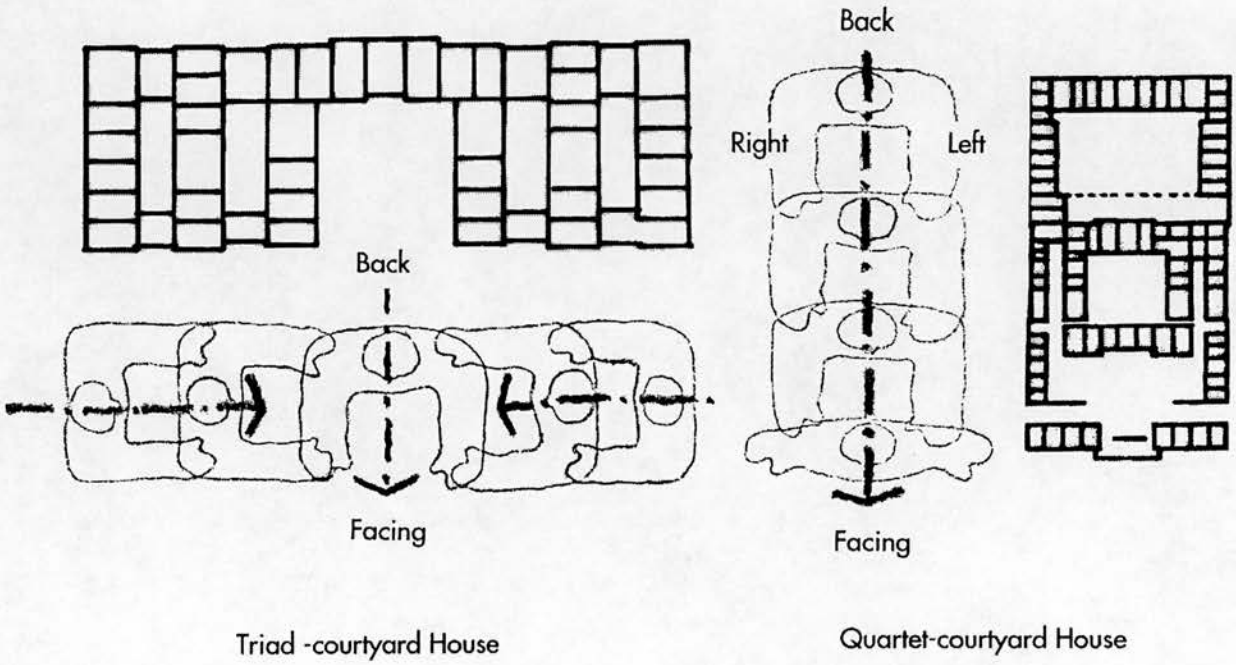

Fig. 5-24 The theory of anthropomorphic house (after f.21: 191)

alternating basis [13]. Therefore "*feng-shui* is alternating turning" 風水輪流轉, and "separation must happen after long congregation; and congregation must happen after long separation" 分久必和 和久必分 became the essential notion of *feng-shui*, and offered a most convincing explanation for why the same house could provide good luck at one stage but bad luck later on. The idea that "the person who is born at a different time will have a different *pa-tzu* 八字, and that will destine a different nature, and only a certain *feng-shui* will suit that particular person" completed the logic of *feng-shui* explaining why the same house could be good for one person but bad for others at the same time. *Feng-shui* became an absolute belief and guide to all Chinese people. There was almost nothing concerning architectural organisation, from the decision of where to locate and how to orient the building, right through to decisions regarding furnishings, which would be done without obtaining the professional opinions of a *feng-shui* master. The more successful a lineage was, the more attention it paid to *feng-shui*.

However, though there were lots of different arguments from different branches of *feng-shui*, all of them concerned only the father in both the stages of construction and residence. This let the house lose most of its *feng-shui* meaning after the original host had passed away, and encouraged the heir often to build a new house, or change part of the original house at least, to fit his own *feng-shui*. This meant not only that *feng-shui* had a distinctively symbolic meaning in the reinforcement of the patrifocal hierarchy and the ownership of the father, but also its religious-like force perfectly supported the idea of "shining the lintel" in the aim of lineal immortality.

5-6 The space shared with spirits

The Chinese believed that the house was not only the place for all living family members, but also the space shared with all expected gods

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[13] 60 years is one *chia-tzu* 甲子 , also known as one *yuan* 元, three *yuan*s are one *chou-t'ien* 週天; each *chou-t'ien* was divided into upper, middle and lower *yuan*, each *yuan* has upper, middle and lower fates. All these restart from the beginning when a cycle is completed (f.30 1983:142)

(*shen*) and dead ancestors, and that it could be invaded by unexpected ghosts. To understand the notion of this multi-dimensional space, it is necessary to understand the idea of animism in the Chinese "folk-religion" [14] that gave birth to it.

The Chinese believed that the structure of the universe was composed of three overlapping layers. The upper world was bright heaven, known as *t'ien-t'ing* 天庭 (Heaven Court) built by mighty and omnipotent gods which represented the truth, beauty and goodness, the source of blessing and order. The bottom layer was the world of dark hell, known as *yin-chien* 陰間 (*yin*-room) which consisted of both gods of administration and ghosts, representing evil and uncleanness, the sources of the power of bad luck, destruction, illness and disaster. The layer between them is the world of human reality, known as *yang-chien* 陽間 (*yang*-room). And both the *t'ien-t'ing* and the *yin-chien* had personified systems of "policing" [15].

It was believed that these two worlds of the spirit (*lin*) were just the "other side of the same coin" with the world of the human being. In order to guarantee more and longer-lasting good luck from the gods, and to escape from the bad fortune threatened by ghosts, two main utilitarian principles were normally adopted. These were to ask actively for protection and help from the gods, and to have a peaceful and passive relationship with the ghosts.

The former idea is wholly suggested by the surreal layers of "administrative power" of gods which covered the whole district. Whether

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[14] Dr. Ch'u Hai-yuan (Senior Researcher of the Academia Sinica; Professor of the Department of Sociology, Taiwan University) defines it as "...the folk-religion of the Chinese, especially in immigrant Taiwan, was difficult to catalogue because of its mix of Buddhism, Taoism and ancient nature worships...it has no certain creator or particular religious scripture, no clear rule or doctrine, no certain ceremony for enrolment or any clear system of promotion...it took less notice of promoting morality, but it did help people to get through tough daily life...also its characteristic utilitarianism meant it concerned itself with everything in daily life...it thus was definitely a Chinese philosophy of life in the form of religion..." (d.9 1988: 185 - 208)

[15] The *t'ien-t'ing* dominates the *yang-chien* by inspection and travelling down to the *yang-chien* to give punishment (to both bad people and ghosts sneaking into the *yang-chien*) and protection (to good people), and manages the *yin-chien* by giving a administration system of *ti-fu* 地府 (earth-government); the *yin-chien*, organised by eighteen layers of hell, is the place for trial and sentence after death.

in the case of a large urban town or a small rural village, neighbourhood temples were always built for different gods who had different powers of protection for different groups of people (Fig. 5-25). But as gods were in charge of managing the behaviour of people as well, their power of "policing" concurrently existed with their protection. The house was the innermost layer of this protection system. Apart from the main penates welcomed from the neighbourhood temple [16] and worshipped in the main hall, there were lots of secondary penates who were in charge of different matters and who would start to exercise power almost all where in the house automatically after the building was completed, or certain things (e.g. pregnancy) happened (f.23 1990: 103). And though they were all lower godheads, they stayed in the house almost all the time [17] in charge of daily protection and inspection of the family. This domestic godhood formed an individual sub-system under the shield of neighbourhood protection, and the last defence against the evil which was seen as trying to penetrate the house. (Fig. 5-26)

The latter idea resulted from the Chinese belief that only poor and starved ghosts would not behave themselves and hurt people, just as live people do in the *yang-chien*. To worship ghosts with a great deal of *min-ch'ien* (*yin*-money) and bountiful food on certain dates became the main way of flattering them to placate their evil character, and make them willing to co-exist in peace with human beings (g.9 1982: 98). Nevertheless, they were still very carefully avoided because the ghosts were believed to be extremely unclean and evil, and would bring disaster or illness to human beings if they were directly contacted. This belief was clearly evident in the way and at the places that they were worshipped. For example, food offerings were put on the bench outside the threshold of the main hall in

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16 As it was part of the whole network of protection, the ash in the incense burner at the main hall had to be gotten from the neighbourhood temple, and the idols of the "penates" had to be worshipped there for a certain period before they were welcomed to home.

17 The Chinese sent all "penates" back to the *t'ien-t'ing* to report their annual supervision on December 23th (or 24th) and welcomed them back home in the early morning of January 4th in the following year (lunar calendar). That meant that there was about ten days without god at home, and that was the only period for people to do things, e.g. having a thorough clean-up, that could possibly offend gods. (f.23 1990: 105)

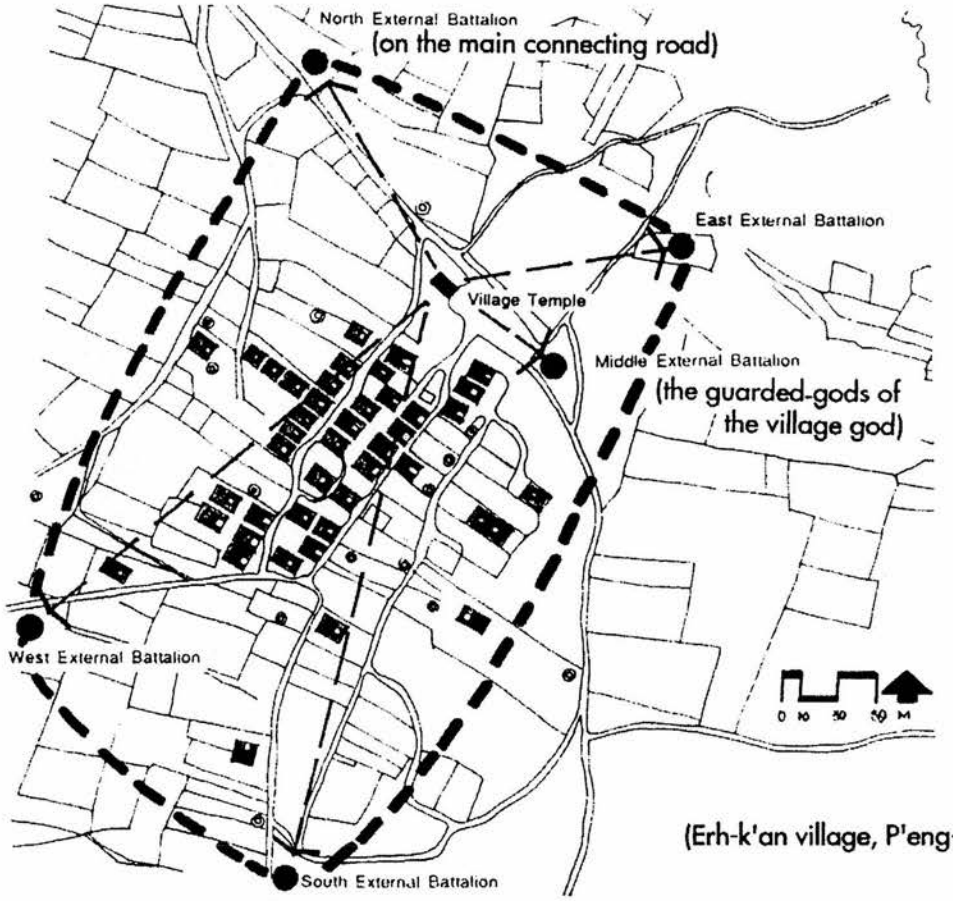

Fig. 5-25 The protection of neighbourhood temples (after b.45 - fig. 4-15)

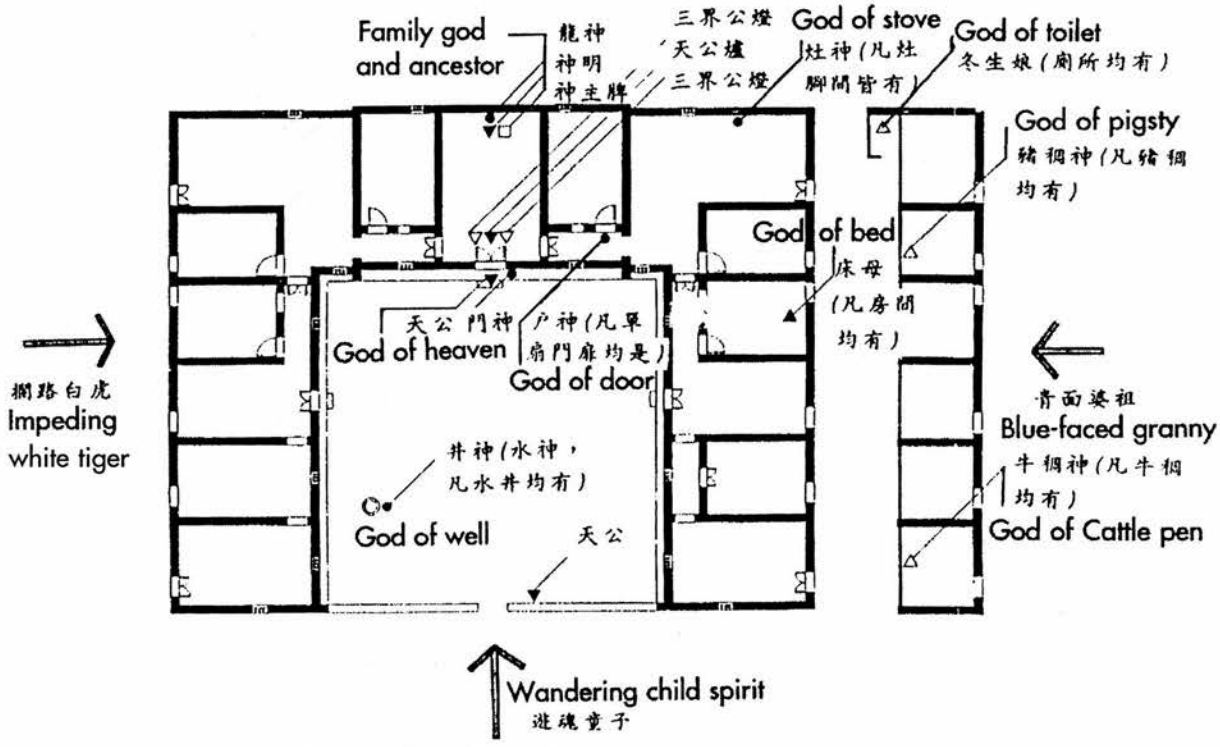

Fig. 5-26 The places of gods and ancestors in a house, and devils from outside (from f.24:108)

the "month of ghosts" 鬼月 [18]; the *ti-chi-chu* (the lord of the foundation) [19] was regularly worshipped with food on the threshold of the rear door in the kitchen, or directly on the earth outside the rear door; and those who died outside their home were not allowed to enter the front gate of the house because the body was believed to become a "wild ghost" and no longer a part of the family, even though in practice the attitude would be very different when faced with a so-called "real" ghost (f.23 1990: 118).

There was no doubt that a dead ancestor was also a form of "ghost", but the Chinese preferred to name it *tsu-ling* (ancestor-spirit) 祖靈 [20] to distinguish it from all other ghosts (*kui*). This idea can also be discerned in the general thought of present-day Taiwanese that one's *tsu-ling* normally is excluded in worship in the "month of ghosts". However, as there was a close connection between tending ancestors and filial piety (d.36 1979: 88), most of the Chinese tended to believe that ancestor spirits did not give unconditional blessing to their offspring (h.41 1981:49). "In the principle of Chinese filial duty, children should always serve their parents unconditionally, but parents had no obligation to repay their children unconditionally in return". *Tsu-ling* could give warnings, such as illness or nightmares, to alert descendants when they defaulted or were lazy in respect of worship, or if they did bad things to other family members (h.39 1985: 51).

As *tsu-ling* worshipped in a family did not normally include those who were further removed than about four generations from the head of

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18 Every July of the lunar calendar is the "month of ghosts". The gate of hell will be open at the first of July for all ghosts to come to the *yang-chien* to enjoy the food offerings from human beings, and accept their blessings. As all ghosts roam at random throughout the month, lots of taboos stop people doing things or travelling. The gate of hell is closed on the last day of the month, and everything goes back to normality. (c.17 1990)

19 This is the spirit believed to live at the site before the time that people built the building on it, so it is also treated as a semi-penate who blesses the building. It is worshipped at the beginning and the end of the construction, and regularly after people moved in. (f.23 1990: 110)

20 The Chinese believe that there are three souls (*hun*) and seven spirits (*p'o*) 三魂七魄 for living people. When a person died, the seven spirits will spread and vanish; the three souls will also separate to stay at the grave (or the place where he died), to go to hell for trial, and stay in the ancestral tablet after the ceremony. (g.13 1986: 50)

the family (d.36 1979: 84) [21], this "remembered" close relationship meant they were strongly thought of as "live" family members. This could be why though the *tsu-ling* were still believed to be able to give blessing to their descendants, they were less associated with magic power to frighten evil ghosts; defence against ghosts was still the responsibility of the penates. The *tsu-ling*'s punishment to their descendants were much less than a spirit could wreak, and seems that these punishments were not made if descendants harmed outsiders. Another piece of evidence that showed *tsu-ling* as humanised rather a deified was that gods of heaven could be worshipped in any courtyard, yet *tsu-ling* could only be worshipped in the ancestral hall. A *tsu-ling*, as any senior family member, was allowed to go anywhere in the house for domestic supervision, but mostly it would, as any other living senior family members worthy of respect from all junior family members, stay in the ancestral hall for worship.

The above suggests that: (i) The symbolic meaning of *tsu-ling* was much more important in the principle of lineage than in religion, folk or otherwise. (ii) The idea that "one's status would not only never vanish after death, but also his (or her) position would be confirmed and became eternal after one became an ancestor" was supported by "folk-religion", this value serving the patrifocal lineage rather then the religion. (iii) The whole supervision network formed by all gods and ancestors was the reinforcement of the patrifocal hierarchy, at least in that all family members behaviour within a house was partly affected by it. And: - (d) The host's being the only qualified officiant of the domestic rituals of religion (gods) and lineage (ancestors) made his authority unquestionable. It may not be obvious that the idea of sharing the domestic space with spirits was directly encouraged by the values of patriarchy, but it was definitely utilised to strengthen the patrifocal structure of Chinese kinship. A house, in concept, was a very serious, complicated, and imaginative four-dimensional space to the Chinese.

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21 Because of *fang*s' continual division, distant ancestors were merely treated symbolically in family worship and were "really" worshipped in the common ancestral-shrine.

5 - 7 Summary

When Taiwan entered the era of a steady and permanent residential society in the nineteenth century, tradition started dominating all value system in this island. Silently, but at the same time completely, all its local "epiphenomena" (d.3 1983: 5), developed over the earlier period, were modified and adjusted to re-tie the "umbilical cord" with the "mother" tradition from the mainland China. Architectural development in Taiwan was not exempt from this overall influence; its houses went from being temporary and simple to being formal, durable, and elaborate, and most of all they were universally faithful to the traditional architecture on spatial principles and rules of practice. These made traditional Chinese houses in Taiwan during 19th century good examples where the essence of deep-rooted male values in Chinese tradition may be examined.

Theoretically, the scholars, the *feng-shui* masters, and the chief-carpenters all played the role of architects in Chinese history, but, on the other hand, we find that architectural developments remained in a very inert stage of formal "duplication" and spatial superstition arisen from the social norms, laws, and *feng-shui* principles. Traditional Chinese houses thus could be characterised as at an ambiguous interface between "architecture designed by architects" and "architecture without architects". Traditional houses in 19th century Taiwan were not excepted from these characteristic mix of rigidity and unity.

When examined in depth, bearing in mind the connection of the Chinese recognition of space and the domestic structure of human relationship, it is clear that the spatial structure of a traditional Chinese house concerned nobody except the father - the host who owned the house and all his families. That means that it definitely had to be strictly father-central, and not roughly male-central, as it used to be understood. This was why the spatial order could become confused and ambiguous after the *fen-fang*, and after the original father was replaced by many *fang*s. This value was also strongly supported by *feng-shui* and "folk-religion". For example, *feng-shui*, which originated from ancient Chinese cosmology, not only perfectly matched the values of orthodoxy, but also became a powerful strength to emphasise and exaggerate the importance of

orthodoxy by its mysteriously magic power. The principle of domestic spatial order, therefore, became strict and important because of such undoubted influences. "Folk-religion" made the Chinese believe that all living people exposed themselves to the supervision of gods and ancestors which shared the same time-space with them at almost all times in the house; this became an important part of a spying system which reinforced the host's domination and made the house an extremely serious and dignified place.

In general, the traditional Chinese house could be seen as totally a product of the values of patriarchy. Not only was its spatial organisation considered only from the viewpoint and the benefit of the host, but moreover the fact that its lifetime perfectly matched the generation alternation was regarded as one of the most important symbols of lineage continuity. However, though architectural concepts and practice concerned only the host, and no other member of the family, this did not exactly amount to sexual discrimination against women. This was because:

(a) The female family members would usually be no fewer than the male family members, even very possibly more numerous than men, in a traditional Chinese family due to polygamy, thus the female issue could not be neglected.

(b) Under the labour-division of the cultural roles, women were the only gender who used the house full-time. Their everyday life, therefore, must have been considered before construction, otherwise their cultural role would be meaningless and unnecessary.

(c) The spatial order would also be meaningless if the principles of human relationships were not considered, and whilst the family members, especially women who were almost always the most humble members in the lineage, were not located at the place their role required.

We may almost be sure that the traditional attitude towards gender, which was an important part of male values and a great concern to the lineage system, must hide in a deep-rooted core of patrifocal architectural philosophy, and must be somehow presented in a visible spatial organisation or spatial meanings, previously neglected.

Chapter 6

The organisation of domestic space and the attitudes towards gender

The dwelling house was a physical container for peoples' everyday lives which reflected cultural values in practical terms not just as a set of metaphysical concepts. It might be expected, therefore, that the cultural roles of family members, especially women whose lives were completely identified by the bounds of the house should be honestly reflected in the spatial concepts of the house. Whilst, on the surface, the traditional architectural concept of the Chinese appeared not to express the role of women, it is argued in this chapter that subtle messages about gender are indeed revealed by the house, and that gender was an important factor behind the supposedly completely father-central spatial concepts.

6-1 The divided space and the divided group of people

The wall was the most concrete medium that the Chinese used to present their idea of dualism. As Dr. Han Pao-te argued "...The Chinese could not imagine, or acknowledge the existence of sovereignty without concrete spatial boundary, and they tended to allow only the solid wall as their understandable medium of the physical boundary of territory..." (b.28 1985: 23). That was also the reason why although the Great Wall never really fulfilled its function of defence, especially after cannons had been used in war after the Jin dynasty 金 (1120s A.D.), and although the actual national sovereignty of the Chinese governments exceeded the territory it bounded through much of history, the Great Wall was constantly being repaired and prolonged in almost every dynasty. Also, a similar idea to the Great Wall was adopted in the building of 181 fortresses and 1622 forts with their high walls along the coastline of eastern China, from Kwangtung to Liaotung 遼東, during the Ming dynasty (b.44 1987: 310) (Fig. 6-1). That the Chinese attempted to define their own sovereign territory by the use of

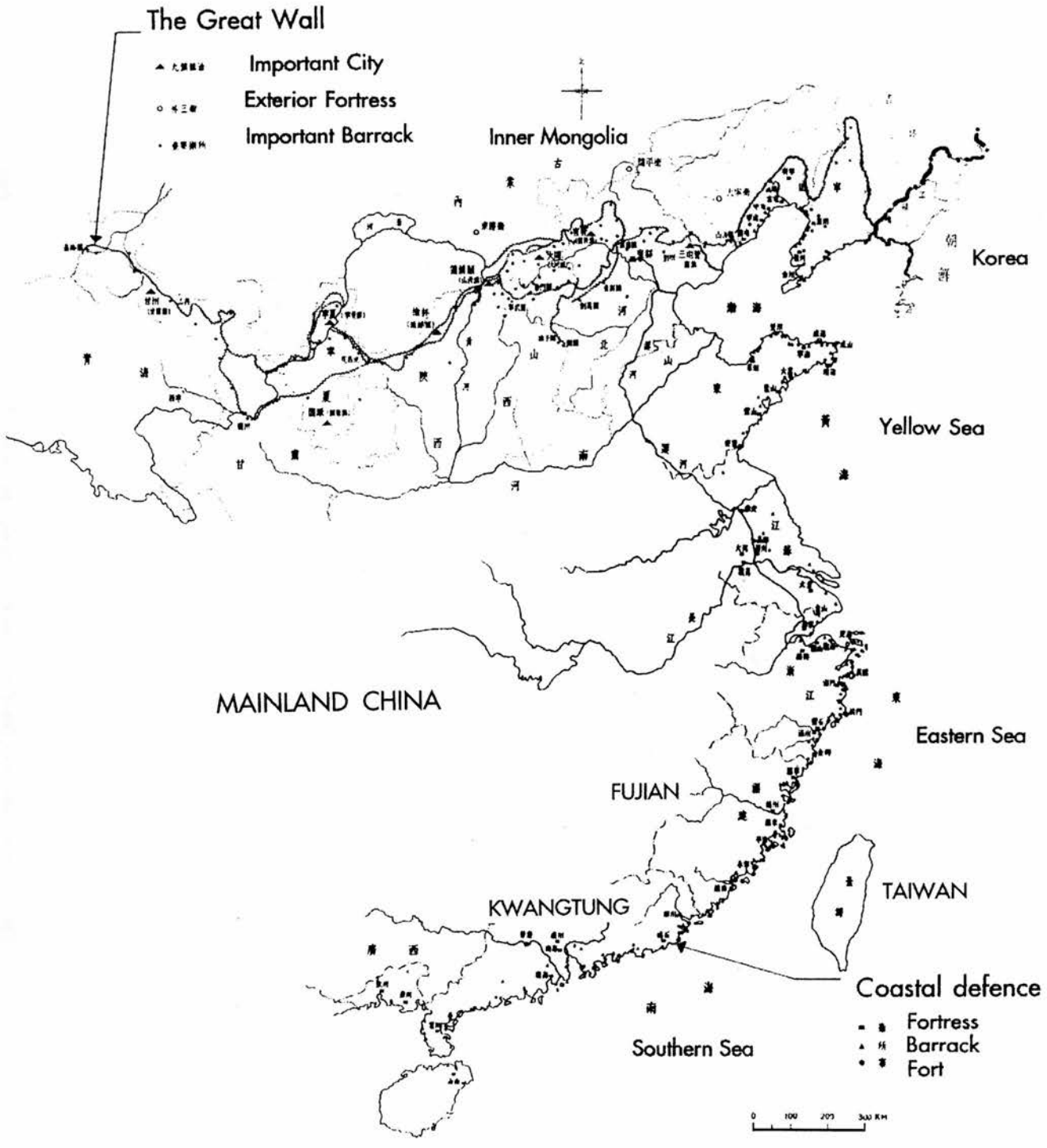


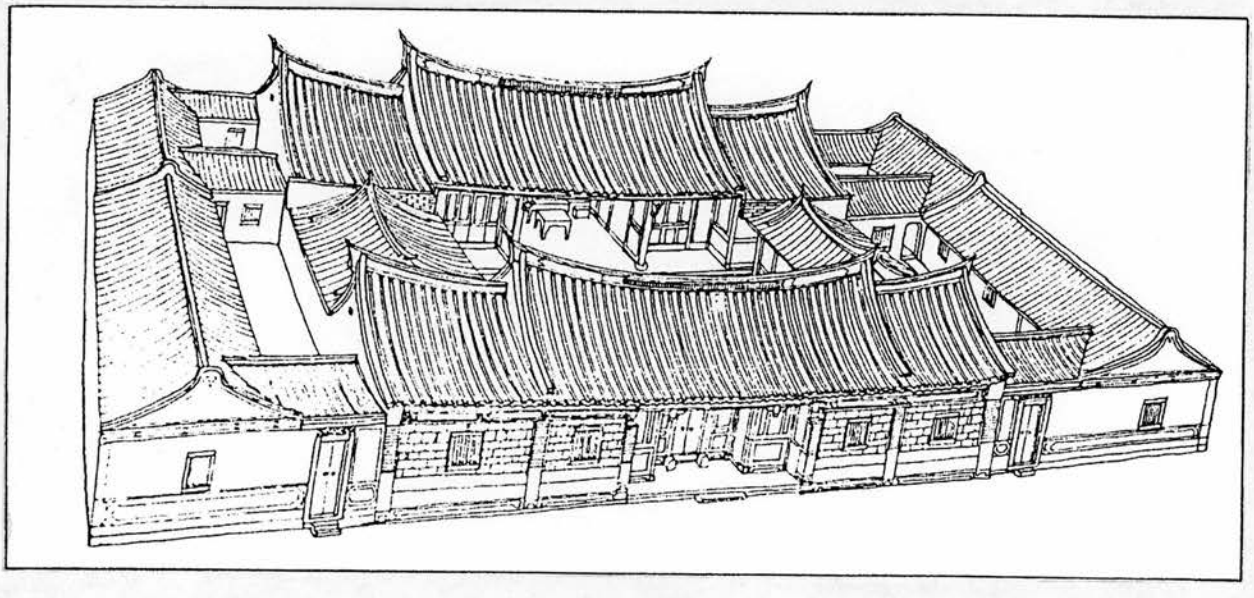
Fig. 6-1 The Great Wall and the coastal defence during the Ming dynasty (after b.44: 2)

walls seemed to be more important symbolically than to achieve the purpose of actual national defence. This could be one of the important reasons why the Chinese never became people of maritime power even though China has a long coastline, and the Mongols of the Yuan dynasty were the only "Chinese" to expand their power to transgress the "boundary" in thousands of years of Chinese history.

Just as walls confined things by isolating them from anything else, so the Chinese traditionally allowed different elements to exist side by side and to retain their own original characters, rather than amalgamating them together to become one single compound entity. Therefore, though such enforced, physical separation allowed for less communication, and reduced the chance of the Chinese being understood and making friends, it could be argued that this approach to territorial identification made it possible for neighbours to co-exist in some sort of peace. In the same way external walls defined a house as distinct from that of its neighbours (Fig. 6-2), even from its own garden whose "anti-orthodox" characteristics were "supposed" to make it difficult to be directly adjacent to the house, just as internal walls defined enclosed courts for family members of different status and sex and connected them to be one complete house (cf. Fig. 5-19). Additionally, the walls of a house were not only used to stop actual invaders, but also to protect against abstract bad luck and to resist imaginary evil spirits. "The Chinese are the people of wall-building" as Dr. Han Pao-te argued. (b.28 1985: 23)

In the traditional Chinese house, walls made the domestic space feel deeper and more abundant in a limited site, and also made the spatial composition more interesting and poetic, because it meant spaces could not be seen completely from any single viewpoint at one time (f.31: 586). Thus people could only perceive the true grandeur of the house from the experience of sequence of spaces. The specific interest of this present study, however, is in the extent to which "walls" divided the family members into different groups for different domestic purposes, according to their different status and gender (f.4 1990: 60), whilst ensuring that both the property and the people were well guarded, and protected from any unnecessary contact or disturbance (Fig. 6-3). It was almost impossible for the Chinese to employ just abstract spatial signs to fulfil these practical

Fig. 6-2 The completely walled courtyard houses in urban areas separated all kinds of neighbours in close proximity in traditional Chinese cities (Lady Wen's Return, the Sung dynasty painting 宋畫, 文姬歸漢圖- from b.44)



(Lin-an-t'ai mansion, Taipei, 1822)

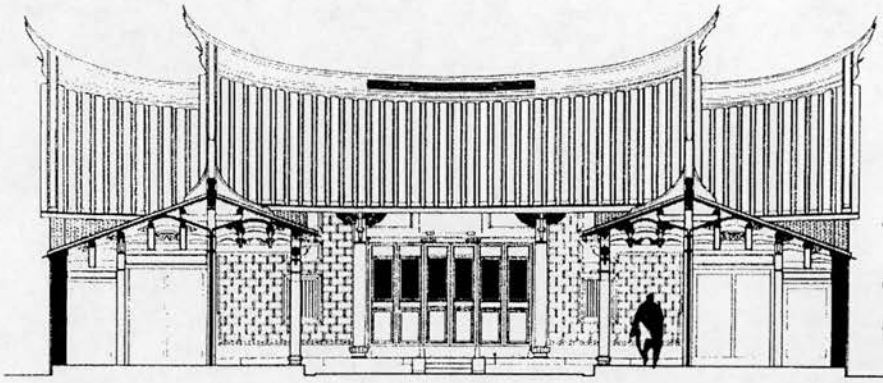
Fig. 6-3 Lots of solid walls of the courtyard house ensured that both the property and the people were well guarded and protected (from b.17: 137)

purposes. All kinds of spatial uses in the dwelling house had to be confirmed by solid walls, even in the case of the family garden which was supposed to have a much freer site plan.

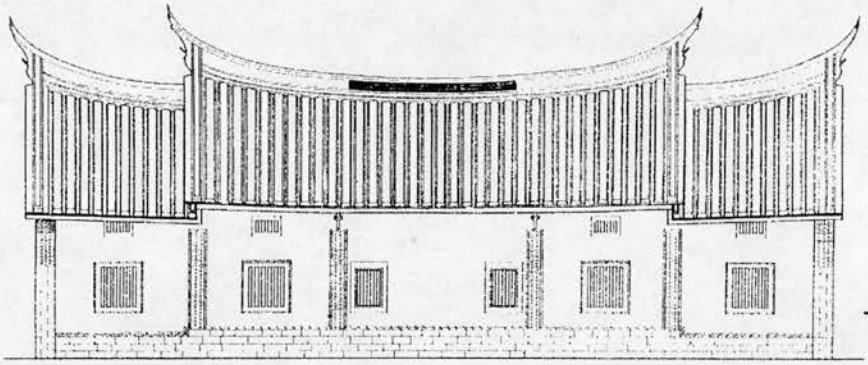
Protecting the abstract divisions between cultural roles within a traditional Chinese family thus needed practical architectural division and separation. This idea was expressed by dividing the domestic space into almost completely closed and separated areas by layers of wall. Each group of buildings, along with the courtyard which they faced, was treated as a complete and independent spatial unit, for each particular group of family members, within the context of a complete dwelling house. All the lateral sides and the back sides of buildings within the divided unit, including the back side of the last building of the former court, were treated as the boundary walls of its court against the outside world. All buildings must only face onto and open out on to their own courtyard. They were absolutely not allowed to open directly onto the outer boundary wall except for the main gate at the front and the small back door at the rear. This was why the last building of the front court normally had no or only small windows at its back, though it was actually next to the domestic court. All the spatial effects of "fluency" and "penetration" of the traditional Chinese courtyard house, therefore, could only be expressed by the elevation of surrounding buildings that faced the central court. The inward relationship of attachment between the court and buildings "tied" them together to be a complete unit, as figure 6-4 shows.

The significance of each court, in terms of its domestic importance, was decided by its relative position within a complete dwelling house. Everyone would be placed in their appropriate court, according to their status and matching position and according to the boundaries of gender, as well as the distinction between the family and outsiders. People were thus rigidly categorised in accordance with the principle of spatial division.

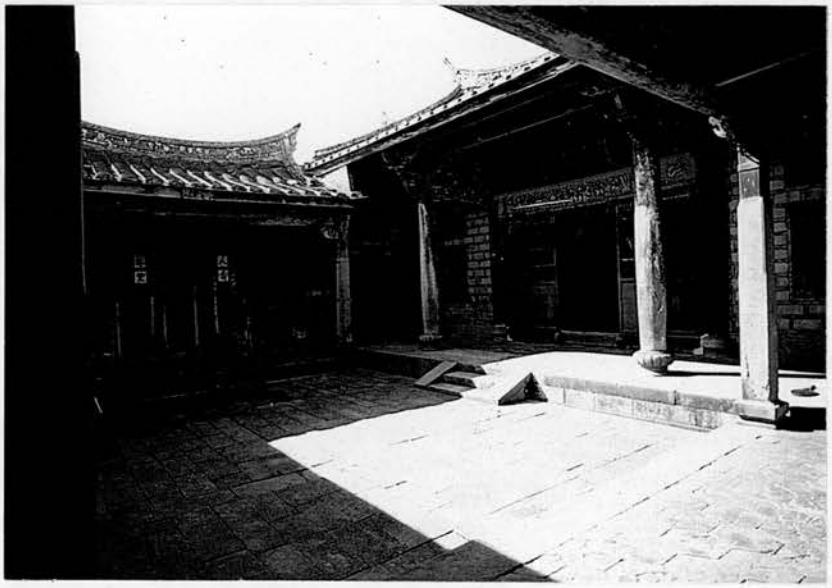
The large number of walls used in the domestic space of the dwelling house inevitably led to a feeling of enclosure, so the space may well have had many of the characteristics of a jail to many family members, and especially to the female family. As a symbol of self-suppression, like the Great Wall for the Han people, the wall in the house would rather have



The fenestration of the elevation of buildings facing the court



The back of the building



The picture of the court and the surrounding buildings

(Li-t'eng-fang mansion, Tao-yuan, about the 1860s)

Fig. 6-4 The spatial "fluency" and "penetration" could only exist on the interface between the court and the facing buildings (from b.25: 3)

had the effect of restraining the family members from exceeding their allowed space than of defending them against intruders from outside. This completely isolated and inward characteristic of space was understood by the Chinese even though individuals themselves were isolated and trapped in that bounded space. It was customary for the Chinese to ask "what time is it outside the courtyard" and to find in the literature expressions such as "...there is no knowing whose courtyard will have the earliest spring...".

Because of the obstruction provided by the many layers of walls, the door became the only means and expression of communication within and transportation around a house. Both its practical function as the means of entrance and exit, and its symbolic meaning gave the doorway great significance within the domestic environment. This significance could be expressed in a number of ways as follows:

(a) As a sign of people's status - The status of the host would be expressed by the size, the colour, and ornamental features of the front gate, regulated by the law and the folk customs. The status of a guest was shown by whether it was the main door or the side door that he (or she) was permitted to pass, and by which door in which *chin* he (or she) would be welcomed and seen off by his (or her) host (f.18 1991: 83). The status of a family member was shown by which door he or she was allowed to use, on both normal and special occasions. For instance, female family members were never allowed to go through the main gate under almost any circumstances (refer to the plot of The Dream of the Red Chamber), and a concubine's coffin was absolutely forbidden to be carried through the main door. Also it was an indication of one's relationship with the host, or the master, whether one was allowed to stay inside the door with them or not. For example, only the attached maidservant was allowed to stay inside the area of the second door (b.20 1984: 198). Students were called "the men inside the door" 門人, and unqualified people, or laymen, were called "the people out of the door" 門外漢.

(b) The door, opposite the wall, was permanently opened to symbolise openness to communication. To men, an open door would suggest that the host welcomed talent and virtue from everywhere, and it would also be a sign of a host's achievement and richness. Only decadent lineage or recluses would let their doors be closed to deter visitors and to stop social communication (f.18 1991: 87). To keep one's door wide open would

express, to both men and women, one's frankness and innocence when they stayed inside (b.30 1984: 168).

(c) The symbolic boundary of ethics - Symbolically a door could signal not only a barrier to the admittance of unsuitable outsiders, but that unauthorised sorties by family members was forbidden. The second door, in particular, the break point of the interior court and the exterior court, would be the first domestic defence of the gender boundary in the house.

Briefly, walls were the solid boundaries of space, yet the door was the symbolic sign of that bounded space. The separation of walls was concrete and physical, yet the blockade of door was abstract and moral. Traditional rituals and taboos involved doorways and the doors themselves, but never the walls, and even though all doors within rooms, even secondary doors, were wide open during the daytime, their significance as dividers was not reduced less, and could not be ignored.

Though the relationship between the interior and the exterior was of primary significance and was the most important form of distinction of the domestic space within the Chinese dualism, the spaces of interior and exterior were relative. By way of example, according to ritual in Taiwanese houses, the boundary between heaven and the family was the door of the main hall, not the front gate. People stood indoors and faced inside to worship the penates and the ancestors, but stood outside the threshold and faced outside to worship the gods of the heaven (f.23 1990: 133); the boundary between the family and the outer world was the front gate, it therefore was the ritual boundary for weddings and funerals (involving the implication of "outside-ness"), and also the social boundary for guests who were real outsiders. All the doors of a room represented the symbolic boundaries between the user and the visitor and between the master and the servant. Even the inner space of a room acquired abstract meanings of interior and exterior, depending on the way people faced. For instance, a dead family whose feet pointed towards the door showed he (or she) no longer belonged to the interior; and the sign, that the daughter faced outside but the son faced inside during their ceremony of becoming an adult, showed that the daughter would become an outsider but the son was an insider for all time (f.23 1990: 117). A second-door was an absolute limit for women; as it was described by the classics that "A woman should

not go out of the door to welcome or send off guests, nor go beyond the threshold to talk with her own brothers" (Tso-chuan 左傳僖公 22年), The second-door was symbolically as well as functionally secondary to the front door, it was the door which sifted family members according to their sex, once outsiders had been sifted from the family by the front door. It therefore did not matter if it was really at the second spatial location or not, and in fact it could be very often be at the third, or even beyond that in a wealthy mansion.

Thus all boundaries drawn up between people and all divided domestic spaces were made only divide different groups of people and not for different spatial functions. Female family members were especially confined due to their changeable roles and the need to maintain their chastity.

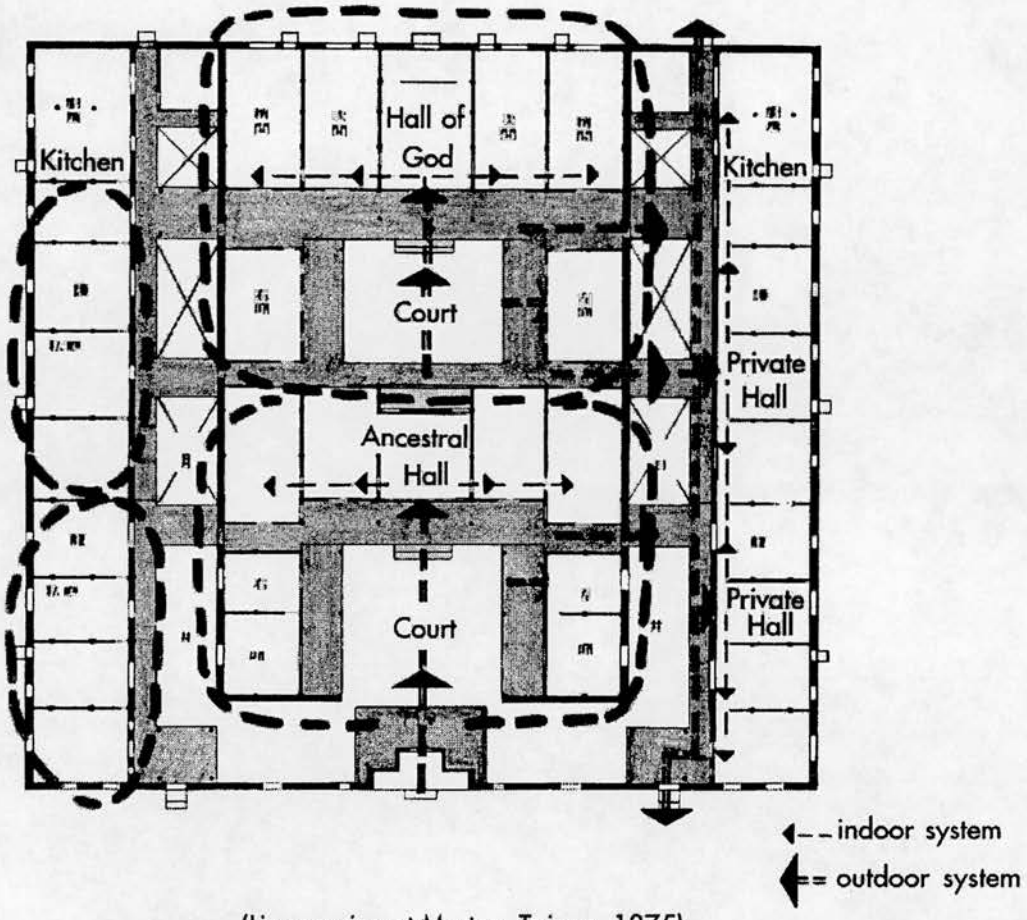
The quartet-courtyard house, as shown in Fig. 6-5, divided its domestic space by having groups of completely closed courts, with clearly defined houses. Therefore, its interior and exterior areas were more easily defined, because of its obvious boundary wall. Windows and doors, then, were numerous and opened more freely on to its courtyard, because the court and surrounding buildings were completely "surrounded"; and because only homogeneous people was allowed in any one group. A weaker sub-system of ethical boundaries was needed for differently positioned people in the group, for symbolic reasons. This might be the placing of a mobile screen, or the extent to which the doors or windows were opened, which would indicate the accessibility of the user. However, the system of indoor circulation, where all side-doors of all rooms were connected making indoor spaces into one linked interior was still more popular than merely making doors directly open to courtyard in the quarter-courtyard house in Taiwan.

Generally speaking, the triad-courtyard house had a less distinct second-door, because it was more difficult to distinguish the interior and the exterior due to its side-expanded organisation of space, and because more doors of each group of the side-house were connected directly to the outside world. It seemed that the convenience of practical living was considered of more significant than the feudal meaning which the house had for peasant families. In any event the spatial organisation of the triad-

courtyard house made it easier for each complete *fang* to divide into clear spatial groups, and it was very convenient to give each of those sub-units the same degree of self-discipline, whether before or after the *fen-fang*, as figure 6-6 illustrates.

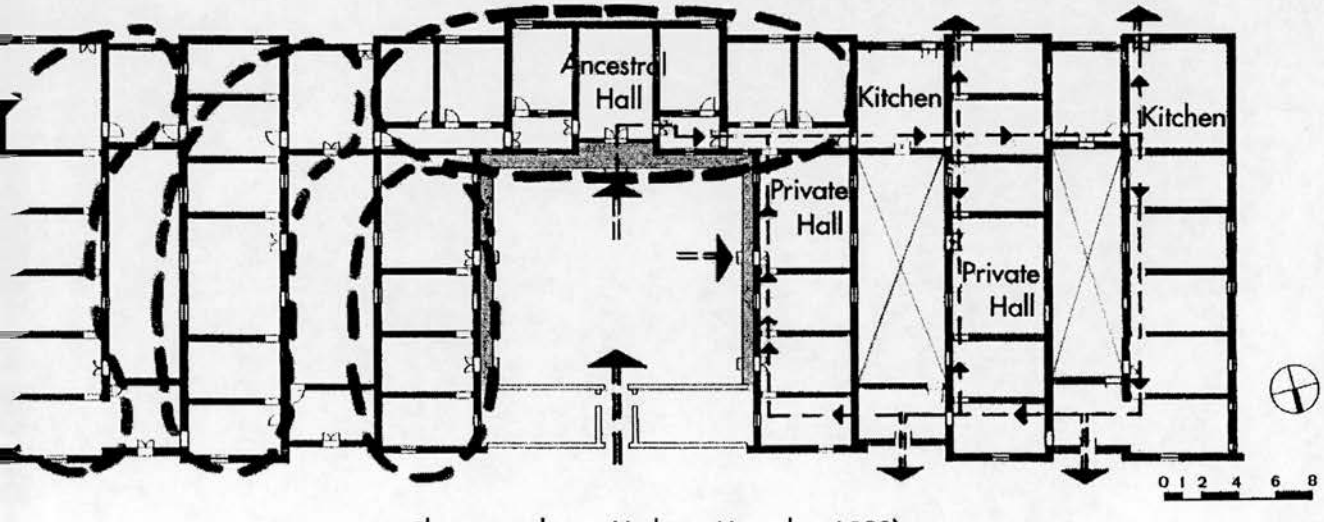
The central front court of the triad-courtyard house could be treated as a semi-public space, because it was the medium space between the family and the outside world (both the secular society and the religious heaven), and as the neutral space for all family members (a common real estate for all *fang*s). The central front court, thus, was an exterior space even for the most interior layer of side-houses. For this reason, unlike the quartet-courtyard house, only a few small windows and doors of the halls were allowed to open directly onto the centre courtyard. The doors of each room in the building that only opened onto the flanks of the main hall and the side-halls, then functioned as the "second-door". The same principle was also adopted in each outer side-house, because the side-court was usually allowed to have a side-door for direct circulation, and would be treated partly as a semi-exterior space. As all visitors were only allowed to stay in the main hall for the purpose of visiting the host, or in the side-hall for visiting secondary family members, the main hall fulfilled the function as an exterior court in the triad-courtyard house, and all its side-halls similarly to a lesser degree. The independent system of indoor circulation, formed by all its rooms' side-doors, would connect up all the indoor space to create an complete interior court, especially when the doors of all halls were shut in the evening. From this viewpoint, the triad-courtyard house's side-expanding spatial organisation not only did not contradict the principle of spatial division of the quartet-courtyard house, but provided more interior courts for the female family members than the quartet-courtyard house.

Due to the limitation of width and the particular demands of its commercial function, the street-house had a different way of giving definition to the walls and the divided space. As street-houses were built side by side with a common bearing wall, and the front was used as a retail shop, the independent solid wall could only be built at the back yard. However, moveable windows and doors were usually positioned at the front, but were not completely open to the street, showing that the symbolic meanings of walls were at odds with the face-to-face contact



(Lin mansion at Ma-tou, Tainan, 1875)

Fig. 6-5 The spatial group of the quartet-courtyard house and its indoor and outdoor circulation (from b.41)



(Chang residence, Hu-k'au, Hsin-chu, 1838)

Fig. 6-6 The spatial groups for convenient divisions of the triad-courtyard house and its indoor circulation (from b.41)

requirements associated with retail (the real function of defence was played by the neighbourhood gates in the streets). The street-house also increased the function of simple domestic production in most ordinary Chinese families to become a place of more professional production and complicated consumption. The production referred to here was no longer the housework of women, but the business of the men. That meant that not only did men stay at home much longer during the daytime, but also meant that more employees, or apprentices would be introduced [1] as long-term residents of the house. Clients were also frequently invited to stay for nights on their business trips. With the introduction of more men, including semi-family and other permitted outsiders, the boundary of gender as well as the distinction between the family and outsiders became more difficult to impose within a house's limited space.

As figure 6-7 illustrates, the first *chin* of the street-house was completely defined as exterior area for commercial use, and the *chin*s behind it were the interior area. However, the interior space seems to have been twice divided into different groups for different domestic needs. Its space on the ground floor was for both male and elderly female family members. All the young female family members, who had more reason to look after their virtue than the senior female family members were housed on the more isolated first floor. The narrow and steep stairs, which connected the ground floor and the first floor, had the same precise symbolism and function as the second-door, rather than the narrow door at the end of the first chin to stop outsiders. The space upstairs would be more like the real interior court than the rear space on the ground floor. Men were strictly prohibited from entering; even the male household-head would normally think twice about going there, because the women in there were usually only unmarried daughters, the sub-group of the female family whose virtue was

[1] The apprentices' position was somewhere servant and family, but he only served the host as a teacher rather than as a master. The employee was not a servant at all, his relationship with his employer was much weaker than a servant with his owner, and his status of being a semi-family or an outsider would be decided by whether or not he was of the clan. The fact that most were clan members suggests that Chinese merchants were still fully involved with the traditional lineage system (d.21 1987: 567).

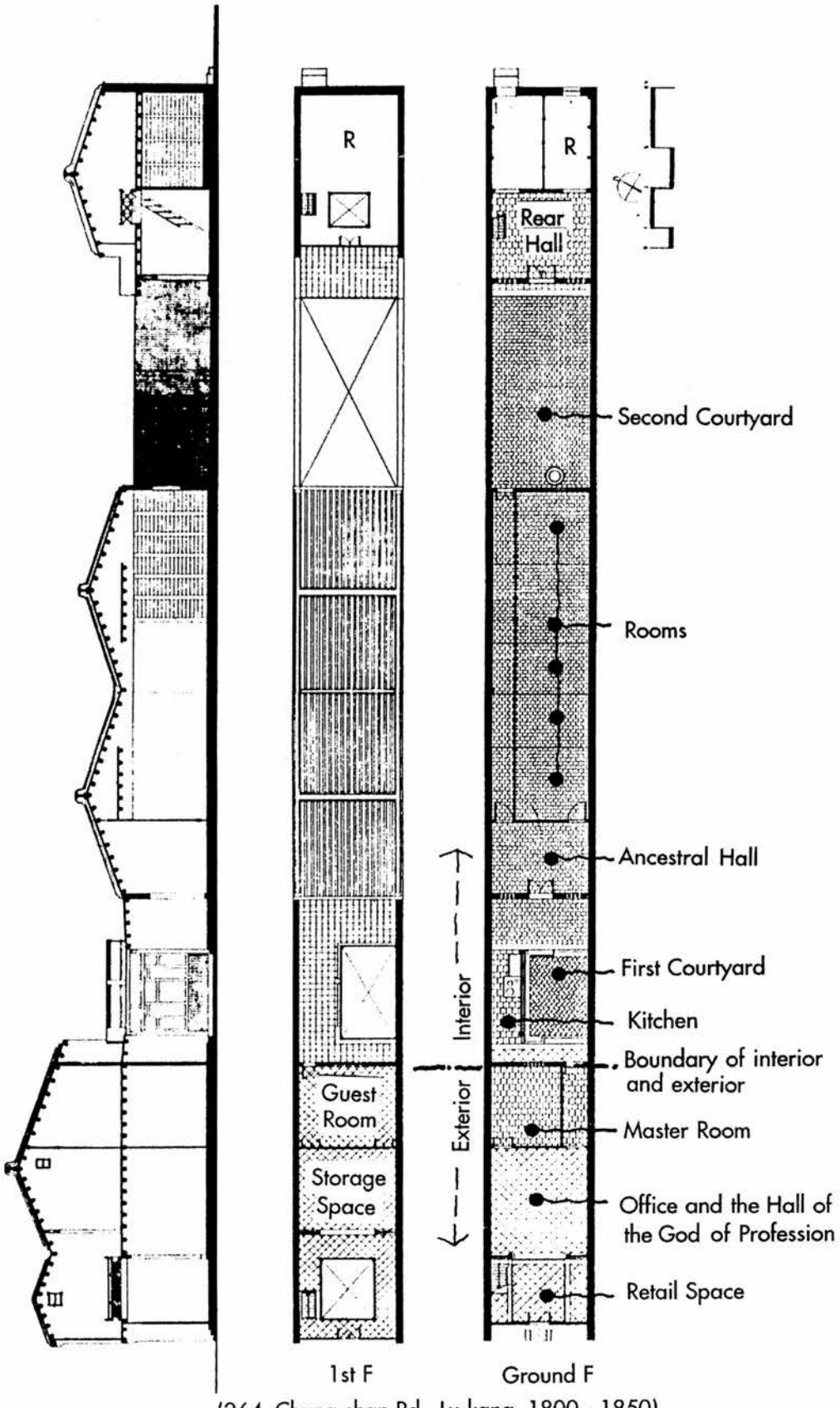


Fig. 6-7 The street-house in middle of Taiwan (from b.29:110)

most at risk and who were under the management of the mother [2].

The main apparent difference from the courtyard house, was that the street house allowed older female family members and the female household-head to stay with the male family members, and there was only a weak boundary with outsiders (excluding business visitors who were still strictly limited in the first *chin*). Only unmarried women were carefully watched for their virtue. IT may be that the virtue of the wife and the concubines was no more a matter of great concern, because they were under the direct supervision of the male household-head who stayed at home most of the time; but as the daughters were only supervised by their mother, another insignificant and powerless woman, their innocence and chastity was potentially exposed to more potential danger in this environment with more male outsiders. As all rooms could only be side by side with their doors open to the same narrow indoor corridor, all rooms at each floor in each *chin*, and with their indoor front hall, were treated as a complete unit for the homogeneous family members. Therefore, though its simultaneously horizontal and vertical division of the domestic space might be more complicated, and more responsive to real needs than the courtyard house, the principles of divided space for the divided group of people was still as clear as it was in the courtyard house.

Dialectically, the concept that people were divided according to their gender and status, by the medium of concrete spatial devices, suggested to me that the architecture of the traditional Chinese house did indeed reflect sexual issues and did not neglect sex as has been argued by Dr. Li Yi-yuan in "Chinese Family and Home's Culture" (d.9 1988: 125), though there is no doubting a prevailing negative attitude which despised and prohibited sex. The traditional Chinese house might thus be characterised as "the space which allowed no sex" but not "the space that had no sex".

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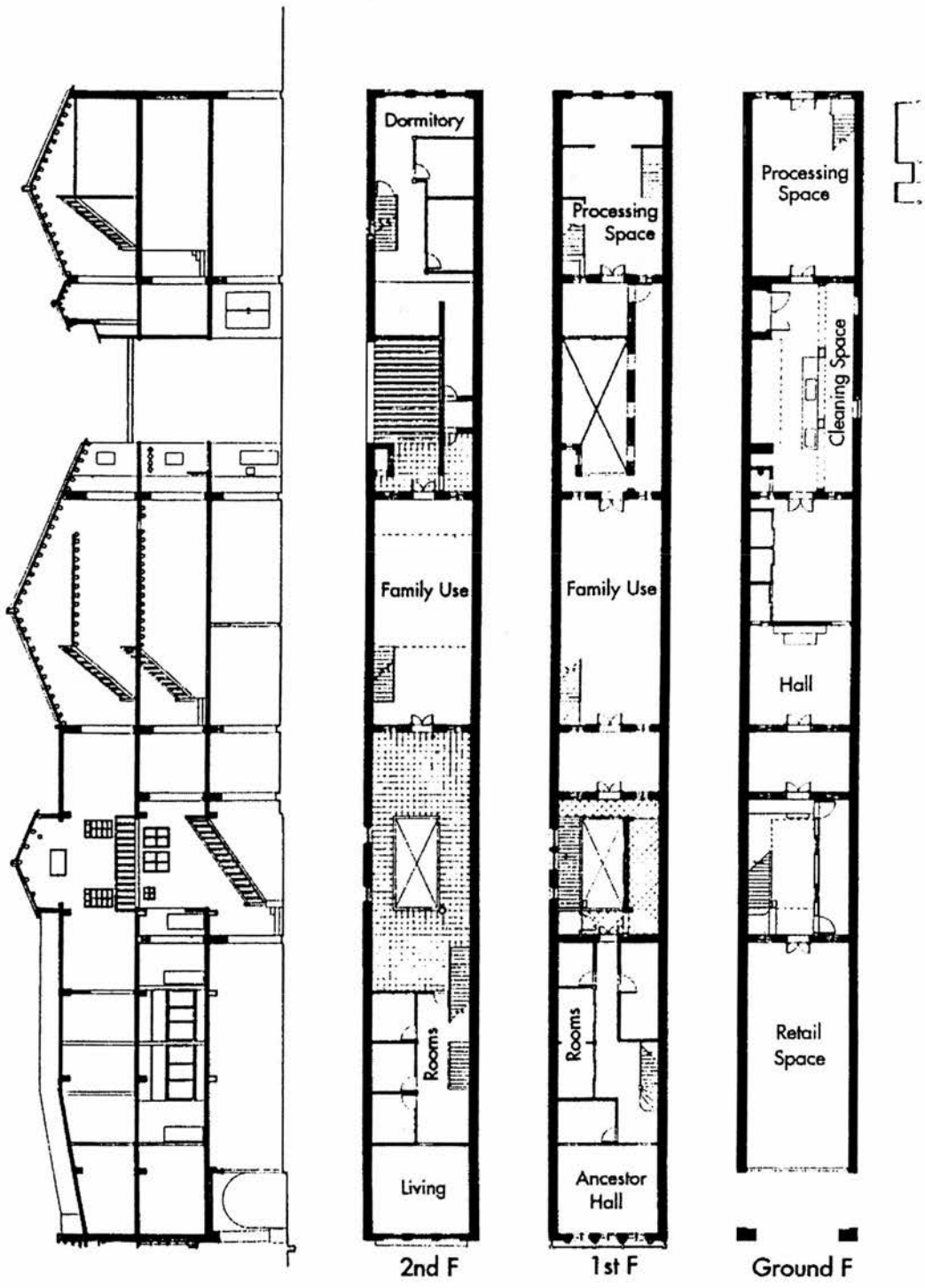
2 Unlike the street-house in mid-Taiwan in the first half of the 19th century that mainly dealt in sugar and rice, the street-house in northern Taiwan after the 1850's, as figure 6-8 shows, needed more space for more complicated process of secondary production of camphor, tea, and herbal medicine etc. The ground floor, including the rear *chin*s, then had to be completely given over to production, storage, retail, and accommodation of employees. The space for the family thus had to move to the upper floors: the first floor was for the ancestral hall, male and older female family; young female families were housed on the second floor for better isolation; the steep and narrow stairs was still the only means of communication.



(127, Ti-haw St., Taipei, 1850 - 1895)

Fig. 6-8 The street-house in northern Taiwan (from b.39:184)

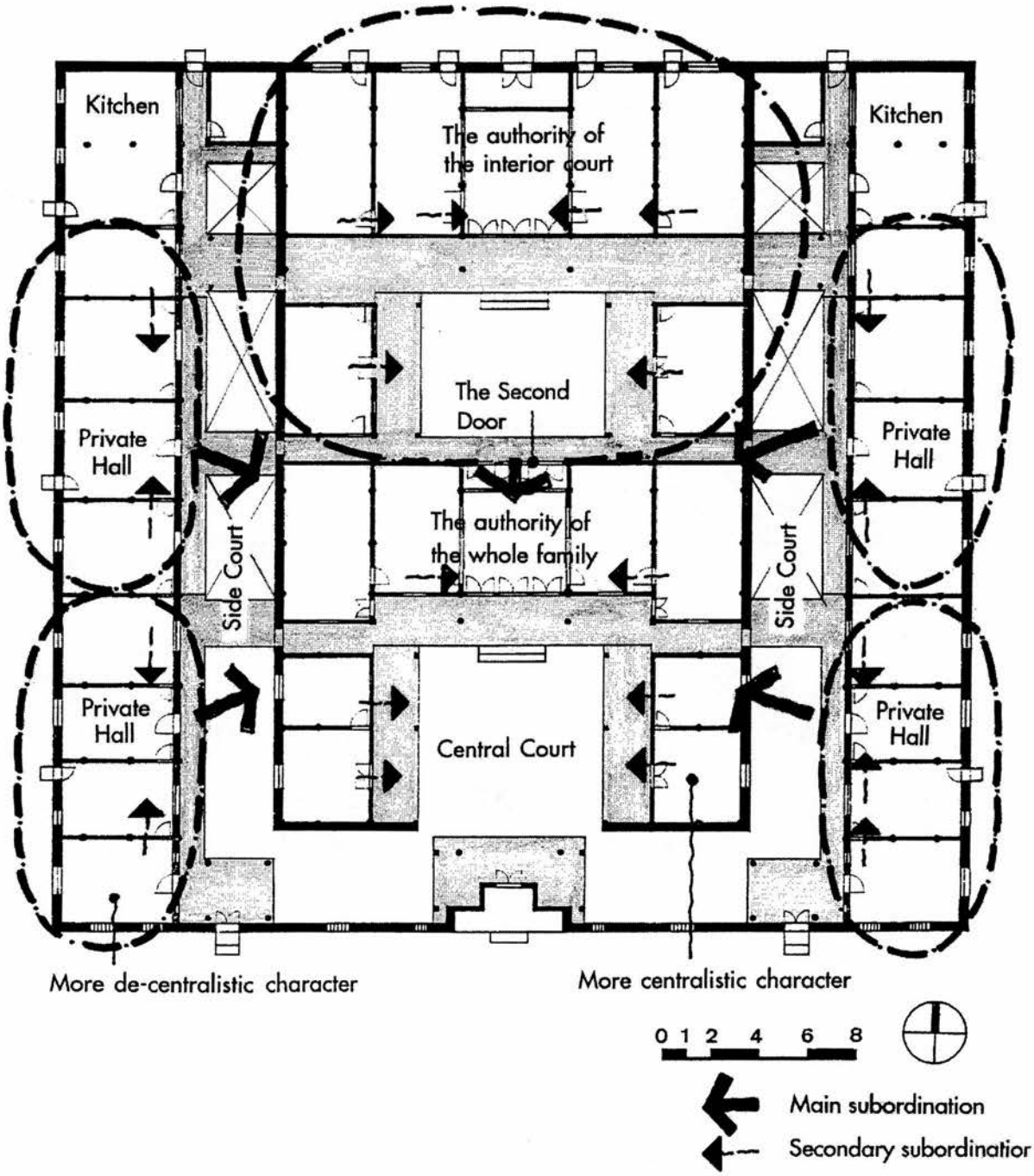
6-2 Spatial division for domestic management

Domestic management in traditional Chinese lineage was a pyramidal structure, which was organised by several sub-pyramidal structures which were built up within each separate group of the family. The father was the head of the whole structure and the real dominator of the sub-system of *fang*, the mother was the real domestic manager of all female sub-pyramidal structures (a daughter-in-law was subject to her husband in the sub-system of *fang*, as well as subject to the mother-in-law in the sub-system of interior court), and each divided space was the sphere for the sub-social activity of a single-sex group, with its own form of stable internal control.

This structure of the domestic management led to the spatial division of a house, as figure 6-9 shows, becoming the key of domestic order, because it only allowed a clear and strict inward order of ethics to exist in each divided homogeneous group, and a rigid relationship of domination and subordination between different groups.

Chinese ideas about privacy, especially for women, were also associated with this framework of domestic management. Privacy for women was only introduced as a defence against exterior strangers and male visitors for the female family group as a whole, but not for any individual within the female family. The reason why the Chinese family did not respect a single woman's privacy might be because they were all considered only as interior people within an interior network of domination and inspection which emphasised unification and collectivity much more than any individuality. The idea that the internal privacy of any individual person within a group had to be completely replaced by the collective privacy of the whole group, was not only a function of the management of people, but also suggests that anxiety about female chastity was at the core of this concept. These two completely contrasting attitudes towards privacy for men and women, were fully expressed in the spatial concept of the interior court, where the outer walls were completely closed to refuse access to men, but had all inward facing rooms open to the common court so women were invariably visible to each other.

Just as the derogatory *nei-chuan* (the interior-family) 內眷 was a



(Lin mansion, Ma-tou, Tainan, 1875)

Fig. 6-9 The spatial group and the relationship of domestic ethics (after b.41)

designation for female family members, and *chien-nei* (the cheap-interior) 賤內 and *nei-jen* (the interior-being) 內人 designated a wife, the humble position of women's cultural role was clearly indicated by the domestic spatial location they were given and the strict limits placed on their behaviour. Though the interior court, that defined by the second-door, was just a part of the complete house, it was almost the whole world for all women in traditional Chinese society (Fig. 6-10). There was no point talking about the world outside the house, because even the exterior space of the house was denied to them under the terms of the patriarchy. As the Chinese often said, "Women should neither go out the front door, nor beyond the second-door" 大門不出二門不邁. The second-door became the symbolic limit of the territory of women throughout their lifetime. Except for male household-head and sons before they were seven years old, female family members were the only people formally allowed within this exclusive area. All their activities were seriously restrained behind this door. In a rich family, as the classic novels described, the second-door would normally be guarded by boy-servants for transmitting orders or messages, and was the place where a woman got in and out of the closed sedan chair when going out or returning [3]. Only very few male professionals, such as the doctor, story tellers, or dramatic troupes, etc., were exceptionally allowed to enter during the daytime on special occasions. And even then, the symbolic boundary of gender still existed between female family members and males. Women would hide behind a curtain or a screen when the doctor came in, even if they were the patient herself, and the doctor usually would bow his head to express politeness and contact no physical examination; and almost all male professionals allowed to enter had also to be old or blind (as in The Dream of the Red Chamber). This strict limit was very occasionally relaxed in the case of monks who were asked to bless the female dead. The second-door would be closed at nightfall, and was locked at bed-time. After this time only maidservants were allowed to stay inside (b.20 1984: 185).

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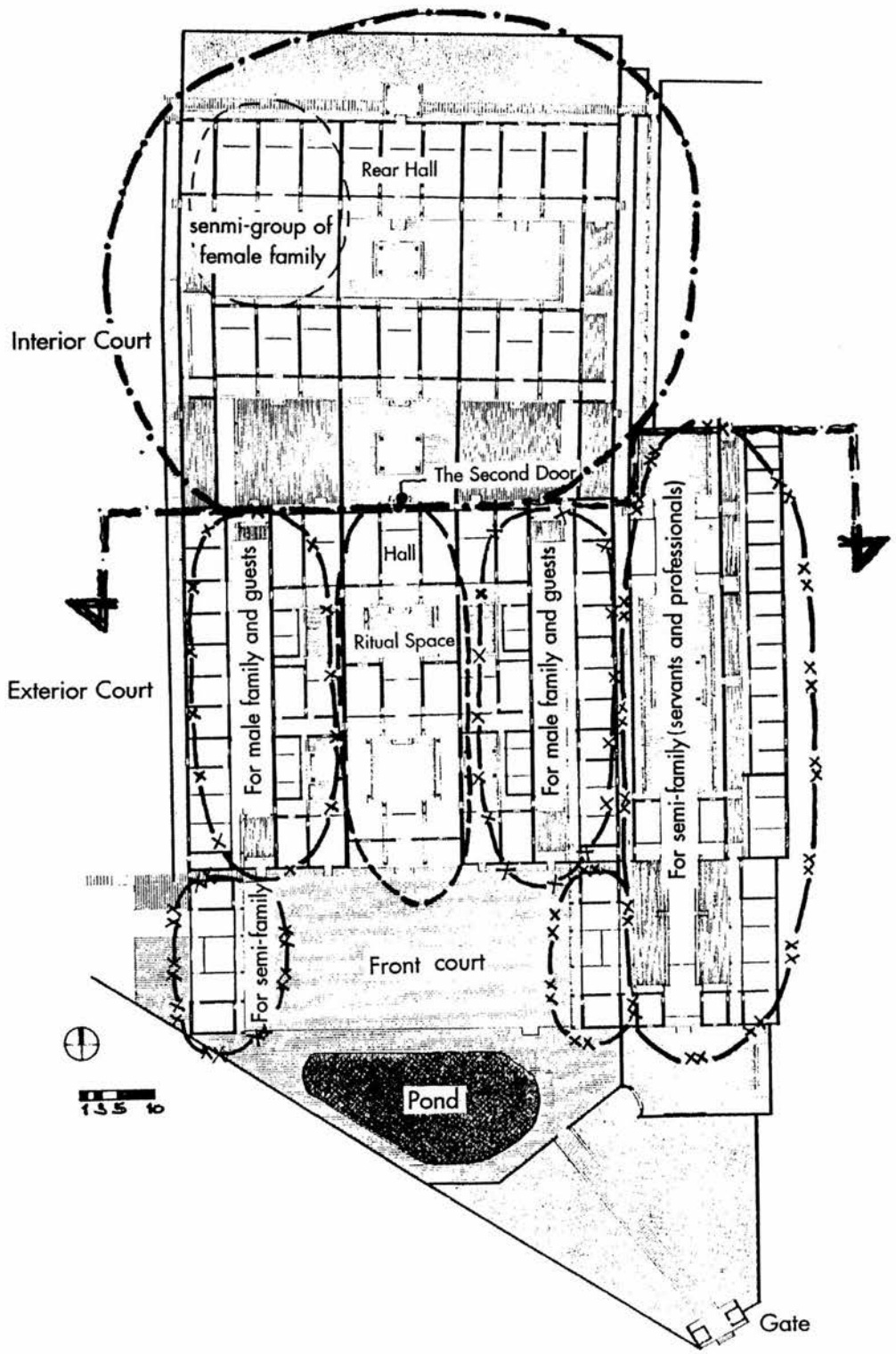
[3] According to the plot of the Dream of the Red Chamber, Tai-yu 黛玉, the leading lady of the story, and her maidservants hired sedan-chairs from the dock to the mansion of Jia 賈. When they got to the exterior court of the mansion, the sedan chairs were put down, and the bearers retreated outside. Four new domestic bearers appeared and carried the chair through doors to the front of the second-door, the maidservants opened the curtains of the sedan-chair to allow Tai-yu to go into the interior court after the bearers retreated. (Chapter 3)



(New mansion of Lin family, Pan-Ch'iao, Taipei, 1888)

Fig. 6-10 The interior court was the whole world to the female family (after b.40:54)

However, despite these attitudes towards female privacy, real privacy for women was very difficult to maintain in practice when surrounded by maidservants and servants. The linking indoor corridors especially meant that all female family members were directly and completely exposed to unpredictable disturbances of authoritative domination, even when they were staying in their own room. Furthermore, this policy of no privacy was spiritually affirmed by hypnotic cultural suggestions such as "Don't cheat the dark room" 不欺暗室 (don't do bad thing just because the room is dark) and "Be cautious when alone" 慎獨, derived from both religious and ethical concepts. Privacy for women in the traditional Chinese family became almost impossible, or was totally unthinkable, under the double influences of both practical environmental limits and mental self-restraint from women themselves.

The structure of authorised management, of course, was the key to give a female household-head the absolute authority of domination in domestic affairs, especially the matters between women themselves, such as punishing concubines, daughters-in-law, or maidservants. The authoritative father was seldom, indeed was discouraged, by the lineage system and by society, to interfere with this domestic authority, as in the plot of The Dream of the Red Chamber (b.20 1984: 153 - 156). Being the lynchpin of the whole system of domestic management, the mother grasped all privileges taken from all other female family members. All interior people (female family members and maidservants) and all affairs of the interior court would be assigned to her. That led all other female members in the system to be considered not only as accessories but also left them be in a state of total control like criminals in a prison. Though the fact that the interior court became an independent and exclusive haven of domestic power of women through the concept of traditional domestic ethics, it was directly reinforced by this completely closed division of domestic space.

Briefly, to divide people into homogeneous groups, and confine these groups within a enclosed divided space, may have been the most logical and convenient management system for male values. The quartet-courtyard house seemed to have a more successful structure of centralised authority, because its spatial organisation of each division was more inseparable and completely central facing; The triad-courtyard house, however, gave its

management a more decentralised structure, with the intermediate layer of the semi-independent unit of the *fang*, because of its more spread out spatial organisation. The street-house would usually have a greater degree of centralisation, which resulted not only from its overlapping spatial organisation - allowing for closer supervision and making it more difficult to misbehave - but also in a less distinct separation between domestic and business affairs. It seems that neither of these three spatial models could fully satisfy either the psychological or physiological needs of women under the intense mental isolation experienced by women, within their limited and closed division. The traditional Chinese house was unlikely to be a pleasant space for most women, except for the female household-head - the only women with privileges in a family.

6-3 The space under supervision and competition

In general, there were two kinds of inevitable competition which existed in almost all traditional Chinese lineages, resulting from the physical division of domestic space and groups of the family. The first was the competition between *fang*s. This could be the rivalry between sons for the collective property of the lineage, or between daughters-in-law for the affections of the mother-in-law (for a daughter-in-law, a mother-in-law's favour was equal to her *fang*'s being favoured in domestic affairs). The second one was the competition between each member of a homogeneous group, particularly between women for the husband's exclusive love.

However, according to the principle of the division, the family was arranged in spatial groupings according to status, domestic position, and particularly, gender. Only the family members of the same status and same sex, but holding different positions, would be set in the same court and kept in high uniformity. One's status was decided by the absolute relationship of culture [4], and the domestic position was decided by an individual's comparative relationship with the male household-head. Each divisional

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4 The status of the household-head was gained from the *fang*'s independence, the status of the wife or the concubine was decided by the rite of marriage, and the status of nobility or inferiority was succeeded to the father, etc., and all these status must gain by the way of social rites.

group of people was clearly identified as having the same status, and could only be classified into the same closed court, any kind of communication between any two different groups, especially for different sexes, was discouraged by the dominating hierarchy. It was impossible for anyone to be elevated to another status group by personal effort or achievements (that was why even a high ranking governmental official might have little influence on domestic affairs because of his low seniority in the lineage). It was only possible to change one's position within the original group to which one belonged. Every one, especially the female family members in the interior court, would therefore know clearly the limit of the highest status and the possible position one could achieve in one's lifetime. The competition of women within the same status group therefore would focus on the relationship between a wife and concubines with the same husband, and the competition between daughters-in-law even though it was basically for the *fang*'s benefits and would be more like the competition between *fang*s (cf. section 4-4). So the internal competition became a "competitive reward structure", this meant that one person's gain must result in another person's loss (b.2 1968: 633). Only supervision and attachment, but not competition, would exist between women in different status groups such as a mother-in-law and all her daughters-in-law.

The site plan of each court in the quartet-courtyard house, as shown in figure 6-11, was completely closed by its outer walls, but was also completely open to its courtyard. The big area of windows and doors allowed its inward space to be totally seen through, especially when they were all completely opened during the daytime. It might make people feel less of a sense of being caged-in within the limited space, but the more important concern would be that it was also directly exposed to the court and all other rooms in the same court. This meant that every member of the group became the object of attention and supervision by both their rivals living in the other rooms, and the dignified gods of heaven from the facing courtyard. All windows and doors should be completely opened, and everyone was forbidden to stay inside a room during the daytime, except under special circumstances, such as illness, pregnancy and during the menstrual period. Though the head of the female group nominally had the power of inspection and had the right to directly go into anyone's room without warning, in practice each person became their own "mental police",

through fear of being spied upon and some "wrong-doing" being exposed (b.16 1988: 203). Thus self-suppression became the strongest power of this supervision system. It would be a reasonable inference that women must have suffered from both panic and anxiety [5] under this totally intense and combat-ready mental condition in this psychologically "overcrowded" environment [6]. The quarter-courtyard house, referring to its completely close site plan and entirely central-facing opening, must, in particular, have functioned as a "panopticon". (Jeremy Bentham, 1987 - b.16 1988: 202).

Since people with similar roles of the same sex lived in the same precinct, with strict controls over information from outside, the complexities of gender exclusiveness were well established and guided the limits of self-consciousness and self-development. The cultivation of one's personality was therefore full of contradictions (e.37 1992: 112). This made women, especially, in traditional Chinese societies believe blindly in authority, and give up everything apart from the great effort needed to become a good cultural figure as defined by men. Not only would interior competition make women become narrow-minded, but it created a cannibalistic atmosphere. The domestic spatial organisation that gave little thought to female feelings provided the traditional Chinese house with a convenient environment for the domestic structure of "bio-power" (Michel Foucault, 1976 - b. 16 1988: 202) and developed into a cold "battlefield" for women.

From the viewpoint of reducing "sensory overload" (Stanly Milgram, 1970 - a.33 1986: 812) within the traditional Chinese house, the triad-courtyard house with semi-independent side-courts, had a better spatial organisation for avoiding unnecessary and unpleasant unavoidable contacts and direct supervisions than the quartet-courtyard house. However, though tense forms of relationship might be less evident in the triad-courtyard house, misunderstanding and suspicion between women there could still

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5 It is that: "All pressure is left to the same degree, any little threats can cause extreme stress and violent response, and sometimes it has little to do with the matter itself. This leads to full combat-ready condition, and that condition can become worse if one is asked to suppress it (a.35 1987: 87)

6 Sometimes a jealous wife and all opposing concubines who belonged to the same spatial division would be separately housed in different courts for the domestic peace when space allowed, as described in most classic fictions; however one must know that it was not easy for most families in reality (cf. Fig. 6-10).

occur and multiply. This could because most their communication and social intercourse inside the family would be reduced by the more apparent and convenient territorial markers, formed by the triad-courtyard house's spread-out spatial organisation and its less convenient domestic circulation, as figure 6-12 shows. It even provided a better opportunity for a mother to establish semi-power over her "uterine family" (cf. section 4-6.7), and provided the most convenient spatial organisation for disunited *fen-fang*. It became the model with the most potential threats to the values of the Chinese traditional family.

Judging from the fact that the street-house allowed less space for mental defence and privacy, the tense domestic interaction of women in a street-house would very possibly have been even worse than in the quartet-courtyard house. All dark rooms were side by side under the same roof with all their doors open to the same narrow indoor corridor, and only the completely indoor common hall was bright enough for needlework and other domestic affairs. Contact and overloading in this interior space, as figure 6-7 shows, could hardly be avoided, especially when a male household-head stayed at home longer and exercised more control [7].

The women who were directly supervised under the severe cultural role of the father and the husband in this limited environment, might reasonably be believed to have felt more like prisoners than in the case of the normal traditional Chinese family which had only the mother within the domestic sphere. It was even far more difficult in the domestic space of the street-house to avoid unnecessary contact. could be worse than the usually courtyard house in avoiding unnecessary contact in one division. Fortunately, the character of its mostly nuclear family, which had fewer family members and a simpler female domestic hierarchy, would normally reduce the potential effects that could be caused by the spatial factor.

Though the universal, long-term mental torture of women was

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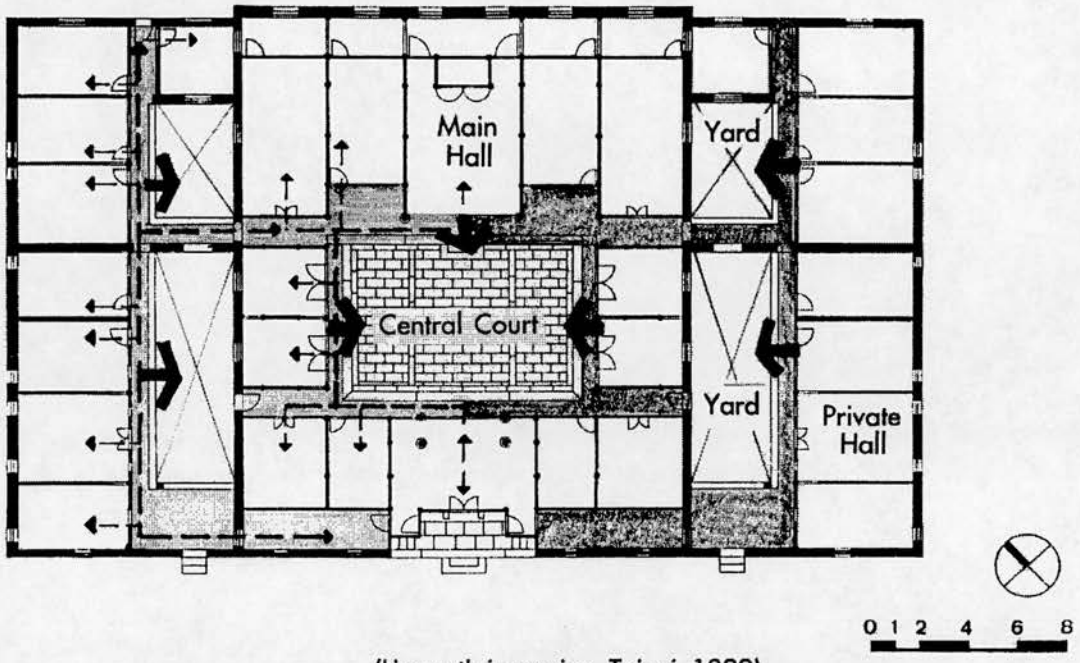
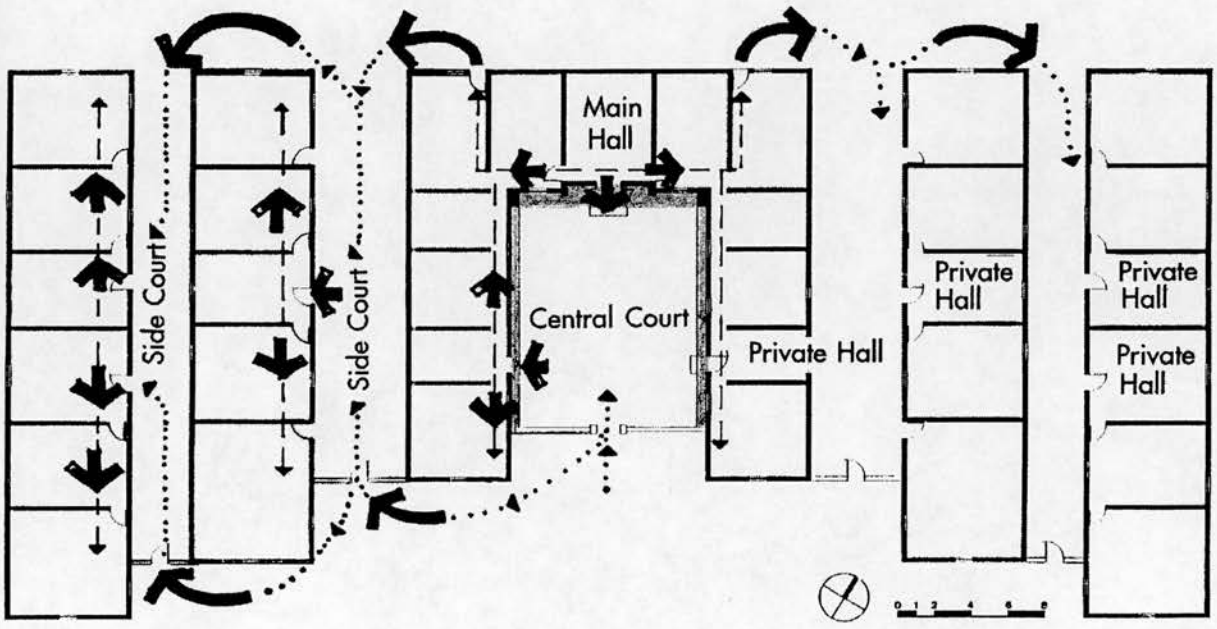
[7] According to the plots of most of classic popular fiction, such as The Golden Lotus, the merchants' staying at home allowed him to know more about and interfere more on domestic affairs, which meant that the supreme authority of the mother which was common in most traditional non-merchant families possibly was less in the merchants' family.(a.3 1992: 16 - 33)



(Lin-an-t'ai mansion, Taipei, 1822)

Fig. 6-11 The space was blocked by its outer walls, but was totally open to its facing courtyard in the quartet-courtyard house (from b.41)



(No. 6, Fen-chiang residence, Hsin-chu, 1881)

Fig. 6-12 The spatial organisation and inconvenient domestic circulation allowed convenient territorial markers in the triad-courtyard house (from b.41)

reinforced by the physical organisation of domestic space, the Chinese did not attempt to improve either the organisation of the domestic space, or the principle of the division of group, but rather introduced the belief of retribution into Chinese lives. Retribution is found to be a universal characteristic of most religions (c.10 1992: 10), including the idea that the weak would have revenge on the evil or the strong, because it was believed that their evil must be punished by a just heaven in the future. The belief in retribution, thus, became an inner power of justice to supplement insufficient justice in reality (c.10 1992: 34). This belief became not only one of the most important panaceas for the weaker female group in the lineage which allowed them to remain passively optimistic and fatalistic regarding their misfortune, but also actively restrained the stronger female group from mistreating and oppressing others. Women were trapped into both the ill-considered spatial relationship and religious bonds within the system of divisional management.

6-4 The multipurpose division for divided families

As each domestic group of the family was confined within each clearly closed space, and as communication between different groups was not encouraged, their physiological needs, especially those of women whose movement was strictly limited, had to be taken care of individually within each divided space. Each space then had to be multipurpose and completely functional, even if it was small (f.4 1990: 57). That meant that the function of each space had to be imprecise and inclusive, small but catering for all needs. The philosophical concept of "nothing is for everything" was firmly expressed in the idea of imprecise multipurpose division for the certain divided group of family.

Though each room with the exception of the halls on the axis of the ordinate was identified by its relative location in the space, and was given to a person whose status warranted it, the functions of all indoor spaces were still allowed changeable multiplicity. Each indoor space, therefore, would be the same rectangular shape, about the same size, with similar doors and windows, and had a plain interior which gave it a neutrality necessary for all its possible transformation. For example, the old parents

might move to an other room (usually the storage room at the corner) after they gave up the title and give the room to the heir, or new kitchens would be built in any proper room after the *fen-fang*. That was also an important reason why rooms, even those in the exterior court, would have no particular decorations with a specific theme for a certain person, or even for a certain gender (cf. section 7.4-3).

On this basis the organisation of domestic space in the traditional Chinese house was little different from that of any other building type such the governmental office or the temple. All served the function of domestic religion, home education, social intercourse, and secondary economic production, just as the governmental office or the temple would provide also the function of residence as well as religious or administrative needs. However, due to the neutral character of space, people could only understand and use the space properly by learning its spatial meaning and taboo. Such doctrine passed from generation to generation, and must have been especially important for a woman, because she would marry into the unfamiliar environment of the husband's kinship group, where knowledge about the space would help her to behave appropriately in the appropriate places as soon as possible.

As the female physiological processes were directly connected with the taboo of uncleanness and male anxiety of female virtue (the association of female sexual organs), women were only allowed to deal with their physiological needs in their own room, in the "safest" and most private way. This meant that the necessary facilities had to be portable enough to be brought to the user rather than the user having to go to certain places to use fixed facilities.

The traditional Chinese house, therefore, provided neither toilet nor bath room inside the precinct [8]. This meant that more labour for carrying and cleaning these facilities was needed, whether this was undertaken by

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8 Even if there was a toilet, it would usually only be a simple, small, independent toilet, for only male family members or servants, and could only be built at an invisible location separated from the main building. But it was never for female family or maidservants, and it was still more common for a man to deal with all his physiological needs in the room (for the rich), or to use public toilet in village and to have a bath in the kitchen (for the poor).

the maidservants in the normal family, or by the female family members themselves in a poor family. Indoor furniture was also required to create a "real" private secondary indoor place for the most private needs within the neutrally-planned room.

Whilst the routine occurrence of this confidential behaviour introduced a strong territorial complex, unpredictable disturbances could be still easily arisen by the senior and self-invited opponents. Maidservants and servants were also allowed less real privacy, and at certain times and places throughout the day the necessary carrying and cleaning of facilities would create more unavoidably contact. Over-sensitivity due to the inner-conflict between a strong territorial complex and uncontrollable disturbances, unfortunately allowed more potential unpleasantness to arise between female family members in most traditional Chinese families.

The other influence caused by the notion of multipurpose space was evident in the case of home education within the interior court. The interior court was treated as the place for all children's enlightening teaching before they were seven years old, and for all unmarried daughters' training for being good daughters-in-law from the time when they were seven years old until they married.

All young boys were raised and "taught" in the interior court by the mother before they were seven years old. Since the concept of "the severe father" defined by traditional culture required them to keep at a distance from their father, almost all the people they could possibly meet during this formative period were women. Their brothers and friends, if they were under seven, would be the only males with whom they could have a real relationship in that period. However this could hardly be defined as a real contact with the men, as the sexual identity of their brothers and friends was not yet as obvious as themselves'; and boys were usually spoiled because of their being the *fang* - the "root" of the lineage, and only the "guest" of the interior court.

At seven years of age they were "suddenly" confronted with a real man's education under the severe, rational, distanced, and centralistic fatherhood. According to psychosocial learning theories (a.35 1987: 51), this

change could very possibly lead to their gender identity becoming confused in later years of their sexual-psychological development, especially whilst through the separation of gender and the suppression of sex. This composite upbringing had the potential to allow the early character and gender self-identification of most young boys to be feminine some extent (a.34 1993: 64). Yet a completely contrasting complex could also occur after reaching adulthood, when a man would oppress women and would absolutely refuse to share his authority with them. This could have resulted from his unconscious fear of the authority of women influenced by the memory of his youth under the "monopoly of motherhood"; his experience of the relationship between a dominant mother, a weak father, and himself, as a dependant child (e.28 1991:98). Sometimes, either of those identity crises could lead to homosexuality, or bisexuality at least, to escape from the "complex tie" (a.35 1987:54). And many men could be very possibly become neither completely masculine, nor completely feminine, but confusingly androgynous, like Jia Bao-yu in The Dream of the Red Chamber. Evidence for this lies in the appreciation of a male Chinese's fine appearance, slim figure, and elegant manner, rather than their robustness, and homosexual and bisexual behaviours were not infrequently mentioned in the classic popular novels (cf. section 3-4). Such complexes together with the difficulty of adjusting to the biological sexual role and social sexual role could be blamed on the over-tolerant teaching from the mother, under the framework of excessively introverted social relationships, bound by the excessively enclosed space. The Oedipus complex might be well restrained by the absolutely patrifocal system, but the "gender bind" (Goldberg, The Hazards of Being Male - a.34 1993: 64), that provided equal chances for a man to stay at either pole of keeping presenting his feminine nature or becoming absolutely domineering and aggressive in adulthood, should be, theoretically, common in many men in traditional Chinese families.

Unfortunately it was not easy for a mother, or a grandmother, to avoid over-pampering their children in a traditional Chinese lineage, since: (i) most mothers were not qualified to provide proper home education because of their ignorance or biassed value systems, (ii) the children could be their only loyal supporters in domestic competition, (iii) children could be the only "investment" they could rely on when they were old, (iv) the encouragement of the nature of maternity resulted from the prediction that the children not

only no longer belong to her but also should keep a distance after they were seven. A boy being the guest of the interior court meant that Chinese men both enjoyed more privilege than their sisters from a very young age, and yet suffered from the adverse influence of the early closed environment of women after they had grown-up.

For young girls, it was impossible to avoid the experience of malign competition amongst their elders in this restricted space with limited and passive social relationships and an almost total restriction of information from the outside world. They could even get caught up in those conflicts, or be frequently used in disputes from a very young age, as described in The Golden Lotus (a.4 1990: 181 - 194). Potentially this would lead them not only to learn self-defence by the dishonest way, but also to practice sub-consciously oppressing the weak and establishing their own power. This could be replayed in the new group of their husband's lineage after married. Their habitual "behavioural sink" (Calhoum, 1962 - a.33 1986: 811) became the fatal side-effect of female home-education in the psychologically overcrowded interior court, and became a concealed and remote, but important source of domestic tension.

By and large, all these "unhealthy" phenomena discussed above could be suggested and encouraged, if they were not directly influenced, by the idea of over simplified dual spatial-division for too many domestic functions and the complexities of domestic power.

6-5 Summary

The cultural role of Chinese men was defined in terms of staying outside the house during the daytime, to show that they were not idle and did not indulge themselves with their wives at home. They were also expected to keep away from all domestic affairs when at home, to show they were not feminine and were noble people above such affairs. All cultural duties for men in the lineage, then, were occasional and defined. Women, on the contrary, were definitely the only routinely continuous full-time users of the house. However, they were, as "the interior family", completely trapped in the interior court by the architectural expressions of

the male-centred values.

Anxiety over the issue of female chastity was probably one of the most important core factors within the cardinal male values, because it directly related to the purity of the patrilineal filiation which was almost the base point for the lineage. This idea, as discussed in former sections, may be strongly associated with the traditional Chinese house's physical layer-after-layer walls for protection, the almost completely closed courts for inward-control, the almost isolated division for all female physiological needs, and primarily the absolute distinction of interior court and the exterior area for the exclusive groups of women and men.

It, then, may be inferred that male anxiety towards female chastity and male fear of female power were the "recessive" essence behind the superficially masculine spatial concept of the traditional Chinese house. All its spatial "defects" that could directly affect women: the inconvenient domestic circulation for female daily lives; the insufficient consideration for female physiological demands; lack of space for female privacy; women's potentially tense relationships affected by the mentally overcrowded environment; potentially sexual ignorance and superstition, or even difficult sexual identity, exacerbated by the enclosed domestic division; etc., were seen as expendable and inevitable side-effects.

All this meant that not only the Chinese discriminative attitude towards female sex and their cultural role, but also the male viewpoint about sex within the lineage were completely expressed by its court by court spatial organisation. From the viewpoint of the female user, the traditional Chinese house may be regarded as representing the spatial concept of defence (to aggressive men) and prevention (to untrustworthy women) for the advantage of the father, a form produced by the double standard of morality for sexes. However though the humble cultural role of women made them silent about this prison-like spatial relationship, sacrificed for this exclusive male value, and prevented from achieving a healthy and complete cultivation of personality, they did play a leading role through their own understanding of the lineage, and made the whole house their stage.

Chapter 7

The use and the limits of domestic space for women

The traditional Chinese house, that served the functions of religion, education, social intercourse, domestic labour, and of course daily physiological needs performed almost as a self-sufficient social unit. However, even though women were the only sex who really made full-time use of the house, the spatial organisation of the traditional Chinese house, as it has been argued in the former sections, was full of suggestions of sexism below the surface. This chapter opposes the common argument that understood the spatial concept of the house from the habitual male viewpoint, and instead examines spatial use, the limitations and the taboos associated with each required function, from the viewpoints of female user. In so doing, the intention is to give new meaning to the domestic space as viewed from the aspect of women and to reveal those spatial notions which were inspired by women's understanding and which influenced women in their daily lives, within a harsh patrifocal regime.

7-1 Ritual - space for religion and ethics

The Chinese believed that there was a world of souls existing in the another side of the human world, and that the spirits shared the same time-space with the family, sometimes even more permanently and constantly occupying the space than the living family (Because of such beliefs, at some places as Peng-hu 澎湖 and An-p'ing 安平 in Taiwan, for example, the ancestral tablet would not be moved with its own descendants, but would remain to be worshipped by new residents at the original hall - f.23 1990: 132). That led the Chinese to associate specific sacred objects with the authorised god in each space, such as the bed to the sleeping room, the stove to the kitchen, and the ancestral tablets and the idols of the god to

the hall. Also, each piece of furniture and architectural component, such as the door, window, mirror, table, and even the well, toilet, and the pigsty, etc., would be treated as the incarnation of spirits (f.23 1990: 132).

To the Chinese, every space in the house therefore would have both the function of practical use and the meaning of ritual, according to the pattern and the time of behaviour. Almost without exception the whole house was full of taboo.

7-1.1 **The hall, the junction of time and space**

The hall was the place where the family had contact with heaven (different space from secularity) and with ancestors (a different time from the present). Thus, when a male household-head stayed in the hall, he would represent not only himself, but also the will of the ancestors to all other family members and guests, and, conversely, the whole unit of the family to the ancestors and the gods. Therefore, all serious domestic ceremonies, such as weddings, funerals, children's passage into adulthood and the giving of names to new born children etc., would need no professional preacher or monk, nor need any specific church or temple, but would be held in the hall and presided over by the male household-head. It was also the only meaningful place for a male household-head to give domestic ethical education and admonitions to all family members in normal times, because all those lessons should not only be given by the male household-head himself, but by the whole ancestral group he represented symbolically (b.30 1984: 114).

As the male household-head was the only acknowledged qualified officiant in the domestic religion, all leading gods of the family would be worshipped exclusively in the main hall within the exterior court only by the male household-head. The ancestors were mostly worshipped here in company with them as well. The main hall became not only the leading space of the exterior court, but also the physical centre of the whole house and the spiritual centre of the whole family. Being the spiritual centre of the whole house it was much more important than its purely practical function would indicate. Thus a main hall was never, under normal conditions, used in a fully secular way even when all other spaces were over-used.

As all female family members were, in effect, trapped within the interior court, and were mentally restrained by the inferiority engendered by their cultural role and by the taboo of "uncleanness", women were excluded from the main hall most of the time, and only on a few special occasions that concerned the whole family, such as the annual ancestral worship and the birthday of the male household-head, or matters that concerned the women themselves, such as their own funerals or weddings, would they be allowed in the hall. Even then, because of their humble status, they were only allowed to occupy the humble side in this space. For example, the body of the female household-head could be put only at the right-hand side of the hall [1], women should always stand and serve at the right-hand side, whether or not there was a senior male present [2]. In short, the main hall was the religious centre of the whole house, yet it had very little to do with the female family. A woman was never really qualified to worship gods and ancestors in the hall, even when she was the deputy household-head. (Refer to the plot of The Dream of the Red Chamber - Chapter 53, in which concubines and daughters-in-law could only stand outside the threshold of the main hall to worship gods and ancestors in the annual worship)

By way of contrast, the religious behaviour of women was active in the interior court, yet, because of their fatalism and helplessness, it was a completely personal behaviour which was concentrated in one's personal zone and, generally, had nothing to do with any other family member, especially not with the male family members. The rear hall, which functioned as the main hall to the exterior court, was the leading space of the interior court authorised to the female household-head. Though sometimes the ancestors were worshipped here in some families due to the fact that ancestral worship could be understood as a routine domestic affair and

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1 If the deceased was the eldest in the family, the men's coffins were put at the left-hand side, and the women's were put at the right-hand side in the main hall; if there was an elder still alive, the coffin was put in the side-hall with the same rule for sexes; if there was no side hall, both of them should be put at the right hand side of the main hall. The mourning announcement of black words in a white paper would be stuck on the left door for male dead and the right door for female dead; Also all family members remained in mourning would be separated by sex under the same rule. (f.23 1990: 118)

2 A woman would be allowed to sit down only when she was the female household-head and had tacit permission from the male household-head, or when she was the widow household-head receiving filial piety.

could be tacitly deputed to the female household-head too on normal days, generally only secondary gods could be worshipped in here by women. However, as all annual worships still had to be presided over by the male household-head, the female household-head's worship here, in ordinary days, could be treated simply as a kind of deputation.

Because use of the space of the rear hall was conceived as something of reward which was bestowed with the title of female household-head, it characteristically became a place reserved for the female household-head to accept compliment and to give orders. The worship of gods here would be carried out exclusively by the female household-head, not to be shared with any other humbler female family members in the interior court. Its function as the centre of symbolical domestic power seemed to be more evident than its function of collective worship for the female family members. This led all other female family members to conduct their own private worship of their own favourite gods within their own room. Usually the Buddhist goddesses, especially the merciful maternal *kuan-yin* 觀音 (*kuan-yin* has been completely feminized as a saviour goddess in China since the Sung dynasty - c.15 1980: 290) [3], were more welcome in the interior court rather than the aggressive and active Taoist gods which were usually worshipped in the exterior court. As each god was clearly attached to an individual woman, there was usually no certain or strict rite, and less serious ceremony at certain times, even if the worshipped god was in fact a high godhead.

Since the rear hall was the symbol of the ultimate domestic authority for women, even when a female household-head became the deputy household-head, after her husband was dead and if her son was still young, it seems that most of the matters of the family would be cautiously and humbly taken care of here rather than in the main hall in the exterior court. For a female household-head to boldly and carelessly use the main hall would be treated as improper and was discouraged, because her aggressive manner would not only symbolically threaten the just privileges of the *fang*, but also exceed the ethical boundaries of gender, and the status

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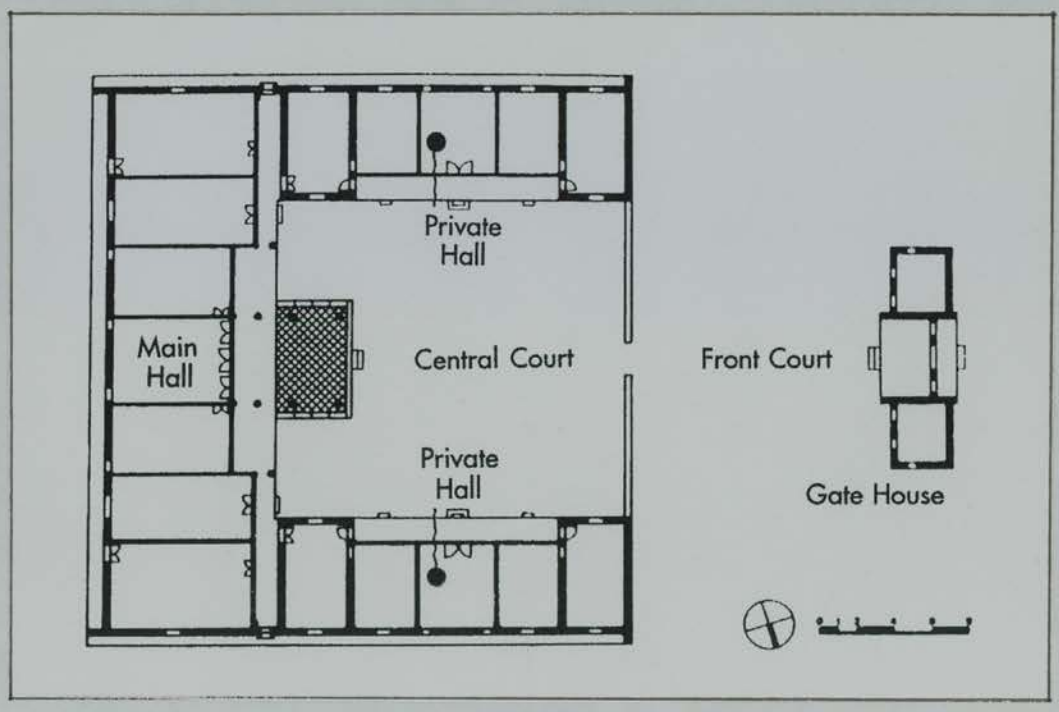
[3] This might be owing to the identify of female homogeneity, and her evident nature of being beyond the mundane world and being passively tolerant.

of the female household-head did not really immunise a woman from the identity of humbleness and "uncleanness". The function of the rear hall as the headquarters of the interior authority, then, was more important than as the secondary religious place in practice. Due to its strong characteristic of mainly serving women, as figure 7-1 shows, the space could even be sacrificed in some smaller quartet-courtyard houses, and did not exist in the triad-courtyard house at all, and most of the functions of the rear hall, in that case, were carried out in the room of the female household-head.

The side hall in the triad-courtyard house might play only a subsidiary role on special occasions before the *fen-fang*. It thus would be less important in the network of domestic religion in the whole family, and could be more flexible for practical use as a living room. It might be partly caused by a predictable change that the side hall would become the serious main hall of each divided unit of *fang* after separation; a further reason might be because it was treated as a semi-exterior space in the spatial organisation (cf. section 6-1). In any event, the side hall, never became any women's real realm, even before the *fen-fang*.

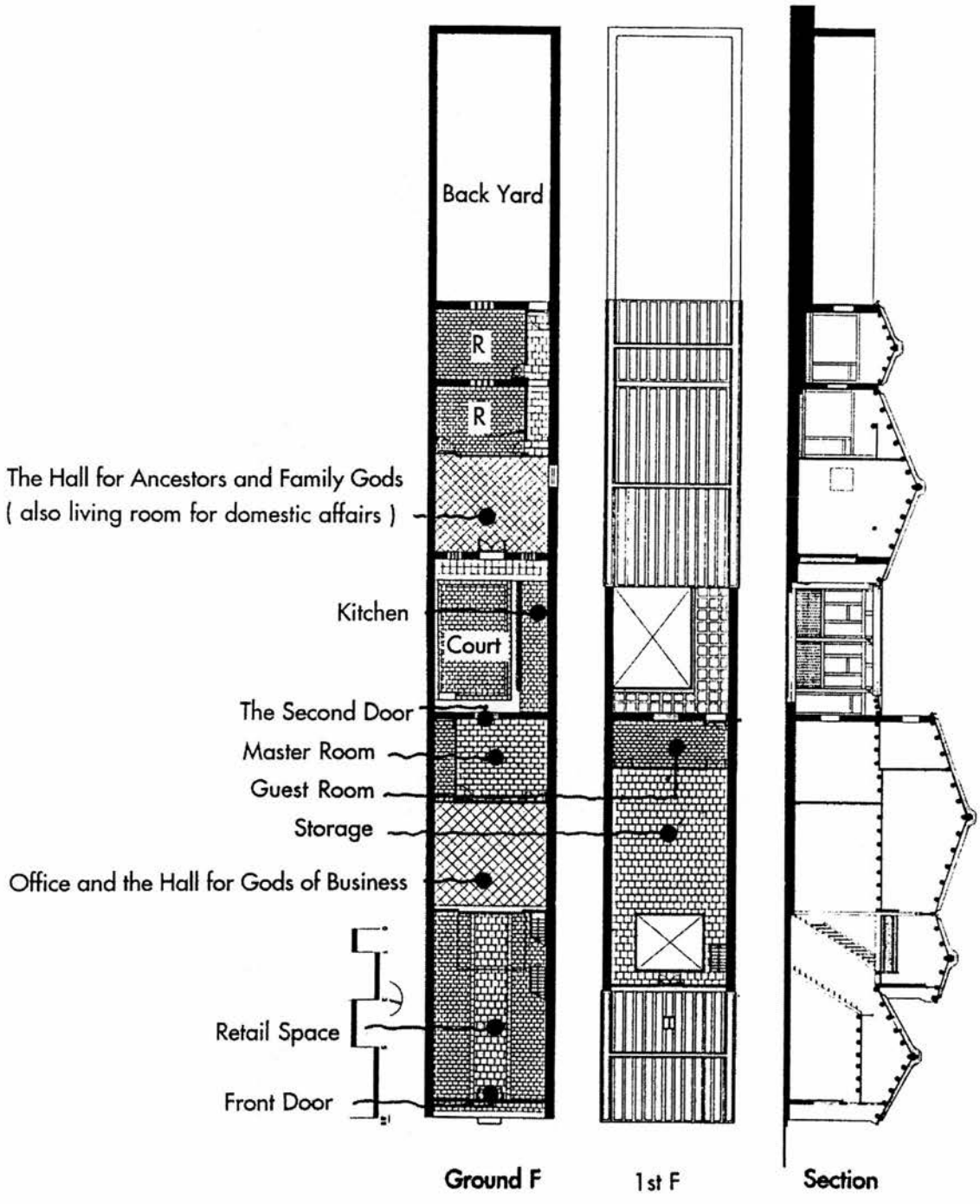
The main hall in the street-house was allowed to share the space with other uses as a result of the less specific division of space. As a consequence, its godliness was much less than in the case of the courtyard house; also the usual penates and ancestors were replaced by the gods of business in this most important hall. (Fig. 7-2). As the self-identification of Chinese merchants was never excluded from the steady traditional values of lineage (d.21 1987: 568), most urban mercantile families were still closely connected with the large lineage (or clan). This led to the household of the street-house in urban areas playing a role as a "sub-lineage" or a practical economic unit, a segment of this huge and powerful framework (d.36 1958 :81). Most of the symbolic meanings and the ethical relationships in theory were rooted at the ancestral house (*chu-ch'o*) and centred in the independent ancestral shrine (*tz'u-t'ang*) in the country district. The network of rituals which combined solemn annual worship in the common ancestral shrine and simple daily worship at the hall in each urban street-house provides us with a point of departure for considering the whole range of differences between ancestral worship conducted at the domestic level and that practised by higher segments of the lineage (or clan). It therefore

Typical furniture arrangement in the main hall (Yu-shan kuan - from b.17: 264)



(Yu-shan-kuan, Chang-hwa, 1889)

Fig. 7-1 The main hall was the only place for ritual function in the small courtyard house (from b.21:89)



(34, Ta-yu St., Lu-kang, 1800 - 1850)

Fig. 7-2 The main hall and the rear hall in the street-house (from b.39)

could also be understood as a mode of ritual division under the framework of the spatial functions of the "super-lineage".

7-1.2 **The court, the path of communication with Heaven**

The court was treated as the unit of spatial separation in a courtyard house (less specifically in the case of the street-house), because all rooms must surround and face it, and were treated as its attachments. Its symbolic function, as the place in which communication with the heavens took place, remained strong for all time (cf. section 5-1). The court was not only the geometric centre of each spatial division in the site plan, but also the spiritual centre of each divided group of people staying inside, especially to the interior court when the rear hall was more personalised. It would be the only official channel of communicating with the gods of heaven, and most significant worships could be carried out only after the ceremony inside the hall was associated with its outer ritual towards *tien-kung* (the lord of the heaven) (f.23 1990: 103). Therefore, though the court was an "empty" space in the traditional Chinese house, it was, at least to the southern branch of Chinese courtyard house, a vitally important symbolic centre of the spatial organisation of the whole house, and not simply some "leftover" space with a vague spatial meaning. The court had to be multipurpose just like any other space in the house, but its ritual meanings and functions that associated with sacred godliness were never changed or reduced with change in the structure of family [4].

The dignity of the court could also be shown by the well-appointed, elaborate construction, and axis-emphasised pavement, even in some interior courts (Fig. 7-3). Trees or greenery, which could interfere with the spatial symmetry or soften its serious atmosphere, would normally never be seen in here. Even the completely controlled bonsai was seldom accepted. And even in the case of the quartet-courtyard house where all rooms directly opened on to a closed court, people - and most especially women were regarded as being unclean and humble, were not allowed to cross it

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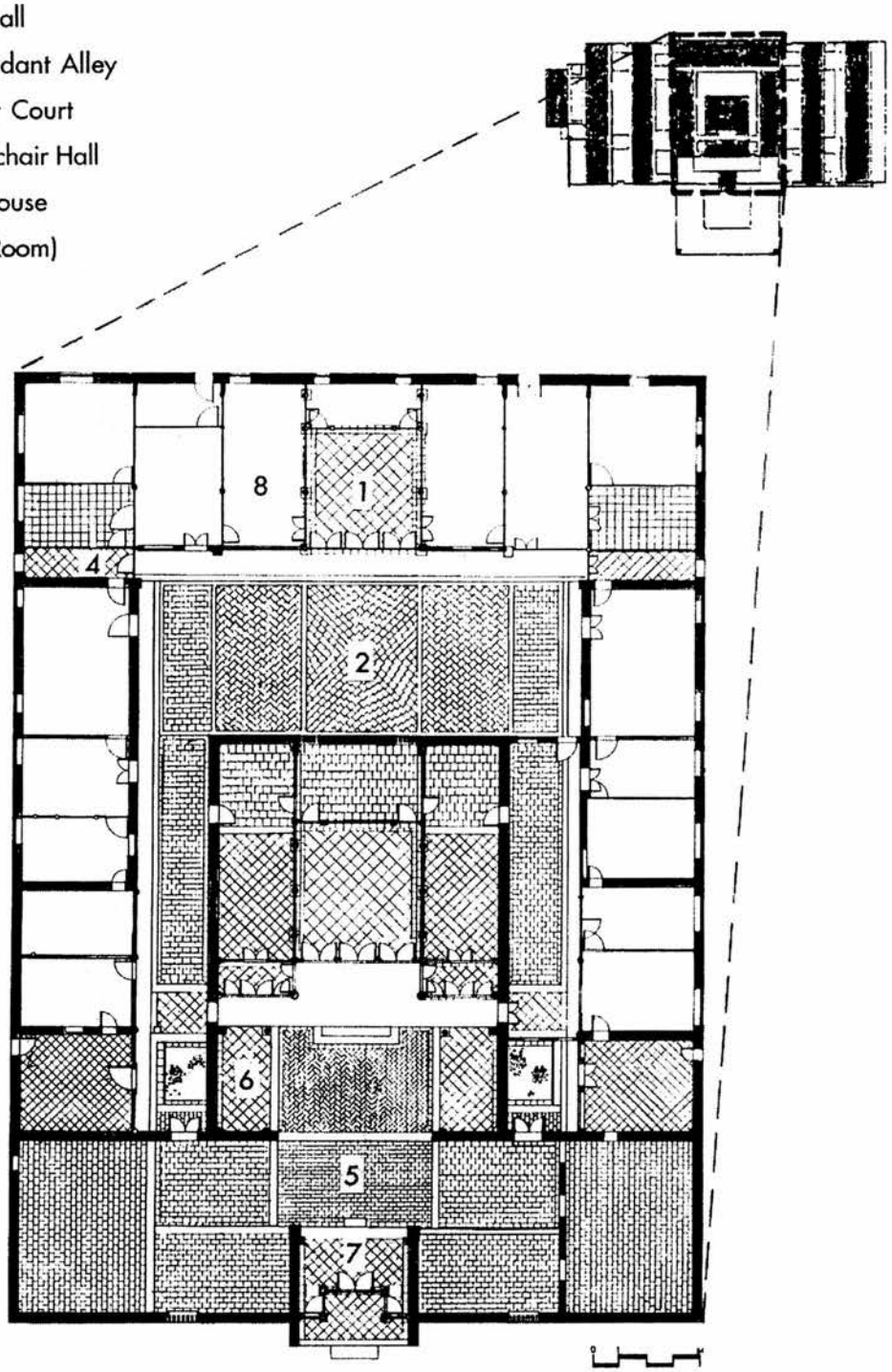
4 I don't agree with the argument that "...court was the remaining and uncertain functioned space in the traditional Chinese house..." in the most relevant researches in Taiwan, such as the Memorandum of the Chinese architecture (b.30 1984: 116), at least it can not well explain the courtyard houses in immigrant Taiwan.

1. Rear Hall
2. Rear Court
3. Main Hall
4. Descendant Alley
5. Interior Court
6. Sedan-chair Hall
7. Gate house
8. Fang (Room)



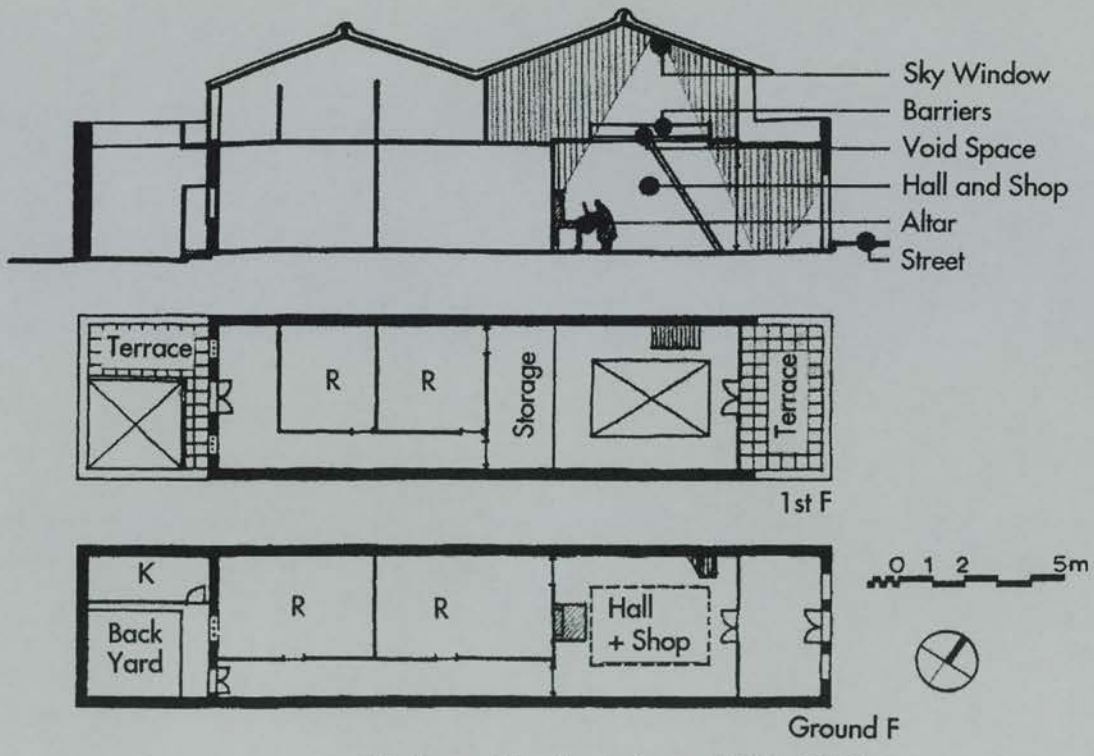
(Yi-yuan mansion, Chang-hwa, 1846)

Fig. 7-3 Well-appointed, elaborate construction, and axis-emphasised pavement of courts in the courtyard house (from b.11:150)

randomly, or to act blasphemously there. This was described in The Dream of the Red Chamber (chapter 42) which referred to the fact that "...the doctor dare not walk through the central way of the court, but only walked along the side of the brick path, when he went into the inner court to examine mother Jia when she was ill...". Though there was less ritual significance of domestic religion in the rear hall and the side hall, the belief that supervision from heaven, that came down directly through the court, still let the rear court and the side court keep its high godhead, and allowed women to worship the gods of the heaven in any courts, at any time, inside the interior sphere. However, the meaning attached to the courtyard was a little different in the case of the street-house. The spatial godhead only existed symbolically in its indoor hall in front of the altar, on the other hand the true outdoor court between two *chin*s would fulfil more practical functions, such as spatial separation and the necessary daily labour, etc., rather than the ritual functions. The indoor hall therefore was, more precisely, a simultaneous combination of hall and courtyard, the ritual meaning of connecting with the heaven was achieved in it where the space on the ground floor was open to the heaven, through the void space of the first floor and the sky window "Heaven well" on the roof, and the delicate barriers at the edges of the void space were carefully adopted to emphasis its spatial divinity (b.12 1978: 66), as figure 7-4 shows.

Most research studies conducted into the traditional house in the case of Taiwan suffer from two significant misinterpretations. The first is that most suggest that the court was allowed to be used for lots of domestic tasks but fail to mention the limited conditions. The argument developed here is that the court would have been available for only the domestic affairs of men not of women. For instance, drying grains was a main function there, yet: (a) it normally only occurred in the central front court of the courtyard house, and not any court in the house, especially never in the interior court; (b) according to the division of cultural duties it was a task which belonged to the male role, even though women could very possibly be asked to help in the harvest time; and (c) as the Chinese were an essentially agricultural people, all behaviour and things concerning agriculture would be sacred and respected, and that matched the essential godhead of the court. The second misreading is that most researchers have argued that "the court was a place for rest", yet they do not mention the

The delicate barriers at the edges of the void space and the sky-light from the roof window (from b.17: 89)



(28, Hung-ch'e alley, Lu-kang, 1800 - 1850)

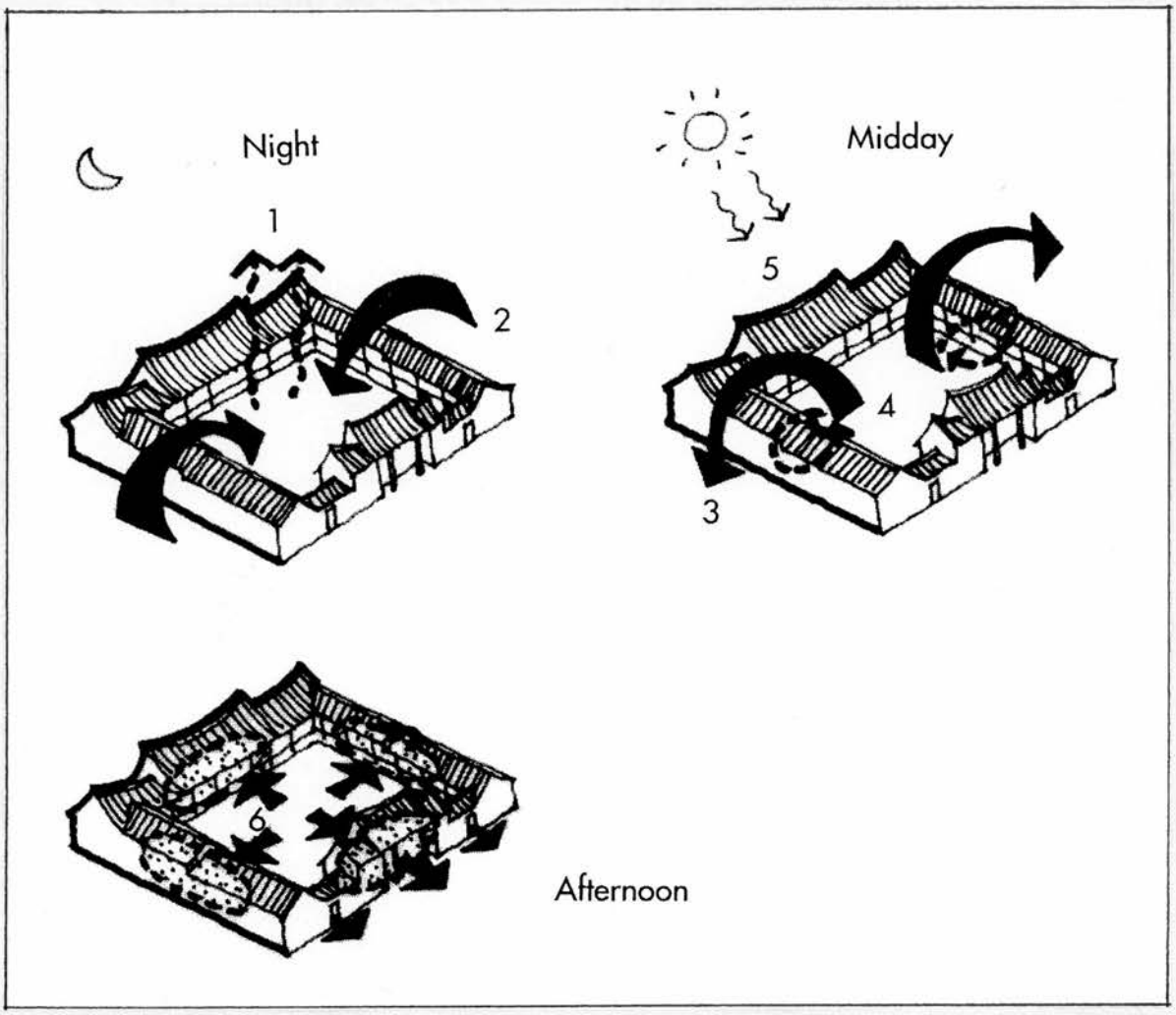
Fig. 7-4 Complex space of the hall and the court in the street-house (from b.12: 67)

conditional factors of this either. I believe that it would only allow men and young children to enjoy the coolness in the court, and only in the evenings, because (a) the dark canopy provided the feeling of a roof or shelter, and made less nervous about exposing themselves to the mighty heaven in the open space; (b) evening indicated that the gods of the heaven were at rest their "off-time" which was easy to understand because the Chinese worshipped gods every morning as the day began, and every dusk as the day ended; (c) the condition of its better physical environment, as shown in figure 7-5, would encourage its being used only in the evening; and finally (d) there is no evidence to show that women were excepted from the gender boundary, the ethical order, or the endless domestic tasks, on that occasion. However, I have to admit that both of these points are theoretical inferences made on the basis of indirect evidences (a survey of the texts of novels and the recalls of old people in country sides) and, in practice, it may quite possibly have had less restraints on women.

Overall the court was distinctly serious and sacred. It was a place which allowed sexes neither to offend, nor be disrespectful. Women particularly were kept far away from both its symbolic and practical uses. This discrimination on the basis of gender extended to some extent even to the associated rear court and side court in the interior area.

7-1.3 **The kitchen, the place filled with godhead and supervision**

The kitchen could be the most complicated domestic space, in both practical and ritual concerns, in the traditional Chinese house. According to Chinese folk religion, the god of the stove was the most important god of daily supervision in the house, because the kitchen was a measure of the domestic economy; some ancestors, who did not really belong to the lineage might be worshipped here under special circumstances (such as the ancestors of the female family who had no brothers, or of the men who were married to the wives' lineage - f.23 1990: 129). Here, the only door (in theory) to the rear of the house here could be a loophole in the whole defence system, either in its defence against unexpected spirits (because there was no protection from the god of the door), or looser practical admission control against potentially immoral temptation from immoral people



1. To lose heat by radiation to the clear night air
2. Cool night descends into courtyard and fill the surrounding rooms.
3. Cool air rises and leaks out of the surrounding rooms. This induces convection current and affords further comfort.
4. Courtyard begins to act as a chimney.
5. Roof and wall do not permit external heat to immediately penetrate to the interior.
6. The courtyard floor and inside of the house get warmer and further convection currents:
   * Most of the cool air trapped within rooms spills out by sunset.
   * Buildings are further protected by the shadows of adjacent structures.

Fig. 7-5 The change of physical environment in the courtyard house (from b.46: 52)

(such as the roles of three *ku*s and six *po*s, or male intruders). To the Chinese, "to go through the rear door" 走後門 means that one achieves some purposes by dishonour or unofficial means of building up special relationships with the people concerned, it suggests in particular the relationships that is built up by the medium of the female families. The kitchen became a complicated place, full of religious symbols, rites, taboo, and ethical doctrine especially concerned with female virtue.

As its divinity was much more collectively applicable to all women, the male household-head personally officiated the annual worship the god of the stove (for sending him off and welcoming him back), and all routine worship as held under the strict supervision of the female household-head. The kitchen became to some extent the second most important space of godhead after the main hall, even more significant than the personalised rear hall. Women, who were almost the only gender who used this space, thus had to be very cautious about their behaviour when they were in the kitchen, because their humbleness and uncleanness could especially offend the god, and any of those offences would bring bad luck not only to the women themselves, but also to the rest of the family. Women therefore must not sit on, or lean against the stove, even their clothes, or the barrel containing clothes should not touch the stove, and they must not bathe directly in front of the stove (c.1 1989: 209). Because the relationships between the female family members in the kitchen would reflect the true situation of domestic harmony, and was an important indicator to the supervision the god of the stove goes annually to Heaven to report on the household, women were doubly confined to suppress their feelings here for religious reasons, so that there was a greater possibility of domestic peace in this limited space.

Contradictorily, since the division of cultural duties excluded men from the kitchen almost all the time (except the particular time of worship), only gods of low godhead, including the god of the stove itself, would be worshipped here, and the influence of these gods extended to only part of the family. For instance, the supervision of the god should concern the whole-year presentation of the whole family yet in reality the god of the stove was seemingly concerned more about female virtue because only they were under his direct supervision in this exclusive space. Therefore, though it

could be treated as the common ritual space for all women, its sacredness was much weaker, and its ritual was looser. On the other hand, its taboo was distinctly greater than in the case of the main hall, because of its stronger connection with "untrustworthy" women.

7-1.4 The room, the place of confused godhead and "uncleanness"

Though folk religion allowed a room to be full of religious atmosphere, situations concerning women, such as women's conceiving and giving birth, were still the main source of the ritual meaning of the room. For example, the "god of the fetus" started appearing automatically in the room of the mother-to-be, from the first day of pregnancy, and disappeared automatically when the period of pregnancy was over, either when the baby reached six months, or through miscarriage. But as it would alternately consign at anywhere in the room of the mother-to-be during the period (f.23 1990: 111), it was believed that any movement or repair of furniture in the room had to be stopped in order to avoid offending the god of the fetus by accident, thus threatening the baby's safety. The "goddess of the bed", who was in charge of children's growth, would also appear after the babies were born, and disappeared automatically after the adult ceremony of their sixteenth birthday. During the period before the children were adult, the child's bed would be simply but regularly worshipped (every three or five days), by a mother for her children's health and safety (f.23 1990: 109). The sacredness of the bed meant that childbirth was allowed only on the ground.

As the Chinese believed that gods stayed whenever and wherever three feet above one's head, even though the rooms were the space for the most privacy, they theoretically were still under the strict and complete supervision of the gods. However, there would be less restraint and obedience, because (i) the loose folk religion allowed more utilitarian alternatives, (ii) privacy allowed more flexibility and convenience, (iii) the godheads of all occasional gods were low, and only concerned interior or individual affairs, and (iv) the "uncleanness" of women's menstruation, especially during the period of the giving birth, would interrupt the godhead of the room regularly. Therefore, the domestic ethical order in the room

would still be prior to the concern of its ritual or deity.

As women had to yield the nobler place to any senior, including their husbands, a wife, or a concubine, could usually only stand and serve whenever a senior, or the husband, was at the scene; even, theoretically, when only the married-couple was in their own room. Any family member was allowed to sit on the ground only when they remained in the mourning for the senior dead, and no one allowed to sit on a foot-stool, as the servants or the maidservants did (b.20 1984: 200). The different way and the different place for sitting became a symbol of one's status and position. Humble members, especially most women, could be expected to stand on most normal occasions, frequently even in their own rooms, making such rooms "places with cold ethics".

7-1.5 **Women were excluded from formal domestic religion**

According to the survey of regular ritual behaviour within the traditional Chinese house in Taiwan (f.23 1990: 128), about eighty percent of ritual behaviour occurred in the main hall, in about eighty-two kinds of domestic rituals; yet almost none of them happened in the side hall, except for the funeral of a young family members while the senior family members were still alive. About twenty percent occurred in the rooms; and about ten percent occurred in the courtyard (most worship would combine ceremonies held in both the hall and the courtyard at the same time to form a complete ritual, yet some which had nothing to do with the god of the family, such as the worship of ghosts in the month of ghosts, and the worship of the moon in the evening, would be independently held in the courtyard). About five percent would be held in the kitchen [5]. The date of the survey indicates that not only was the ritual behaviour that happened in rooms, which was certainly only a woman's personal worship, a minority, and had very little to do with the gods of the heaven or the ancestors, but also women merely played supporting roles in all other ritual behaviours, even the rituals held in the kitchen. "Unclean and humble" women, even though their religious

[5] Several rites were held in more than one place to form a complete ceremony, that makes the total numbers of the percentage over one hundred.

behaviour might be really busy and active, could never play a full role in the formal ritual of the traditional Chinese family and they were also excluded from some, and limited in most, domestic spaces due to their totally incompatible characteristics.

7-2 Domestic labour - space for serving life

Chinese defined the continuity of the patrilinal line of descent in terns of "prolonging the incense and the fire" 延續香火. The "incense" is the worship at the altar, the duty for men to give respect to the ancestors in the hall, and the symbolic function of connecting with the past. The "fire" is the cooking on the stove, the duty for women to serve meals to the family in the kitchen, and the practical function of blossoming the future. This definite duty associated with the female role was also shown in the custom of the traditional wedding, at which the matrimonial ceremony would be completed only after the bride had been introduced to the kitchen, by her mother-in-law, to cook a symbolic meal in the second day after the ceremony of *miao-chien* (cf. section 4.6-2) (h.13 1963: 35). In other words, a woman's role as daughter-in-law (the ritual relationship with the husband's family) was much more emphasised than the role of wife (the matrimonial relationship with the husband) in traditional Chinese lineage values. (a.44 1966: 40)

According to the division of cultural duty, all domestic labour should be done by women. Apart from their native responsibility of reproduction (the ability of reproduction was natural-born to most women, but "women must reproduce" was a the obligation label assigned by men), to serve the lineage was the only important mission to all women. Men should not only not interfere with domestic affairs, they also had to keep far away from them. Therefore, the whole space of a house theoretically should be the sphere for the female domestic labour, even though it basically would still be limited in the interior court because of the primary gender boundary.

Usually the domestic tasks for women would start with the preparation of breakfast and the serving of water for parents-in-law and the husband to wash in very early morning. After that domestic work could endlessly throughout the day. When special occasions or festivals were coming, more

extra work, such as tailoring of new clothes and making special festival food for the family, would be requested. And in the most hard-up households, women would very possibly have to do not only their normal routine domestic tasks as above, but also more outdoor heavy labour, such as feeding domestic animals, helping to dry corn, planting vegetables, drawing water and gathering firewood, despite the excuse of their bound feet. [6] (Fig. 7-6)

Overall, as it was mainly for the purpose of serving the ancestors, the male household-head, and the husband, the essence of domestic labour was consumptive but not productive. The main domestic finances only came from the income of men's outside business, and even the function of servants and maid-servants in rich families was merely to serve the master, and take over the master's duty of domestic tasks, rather than creating any property. It, thus, would be a kind of "vicarious consumption" (Veblen Thorstein, 1899 - h.28 1991: 20). The kitchen, then, became the centre of domestic tasks, because (i) meals were the most important service in daily lives to most Chinese, (ii) the kitchen was the only place with the fixed facilities for clear functions in the traditional Chinese house, and (iii) the kitchen was the only common indoor space for women's collective domestic tasks. With the cultural recognition that "a gentleman should be far away from the kitchen" 君子遠庖廚, men were totally remote from both the cultural meaning and the practical labour associated with the functions of the kitchen. The kitchen definitely became the exclusive place for women, therefore not only the real financial condition and the degree of family's frugality or waste would be clearly indexed by the consumption behaviour in the kitchen, but also women's daily compulsory communication in the kitchen would represent true domestic peace. The kitchen, as it was understood in the religious way that the god of the stove was regarded as the most important supervisory authority in the house, was positively the most important place for expressing the true domestic situation in the traditional Chinese household.

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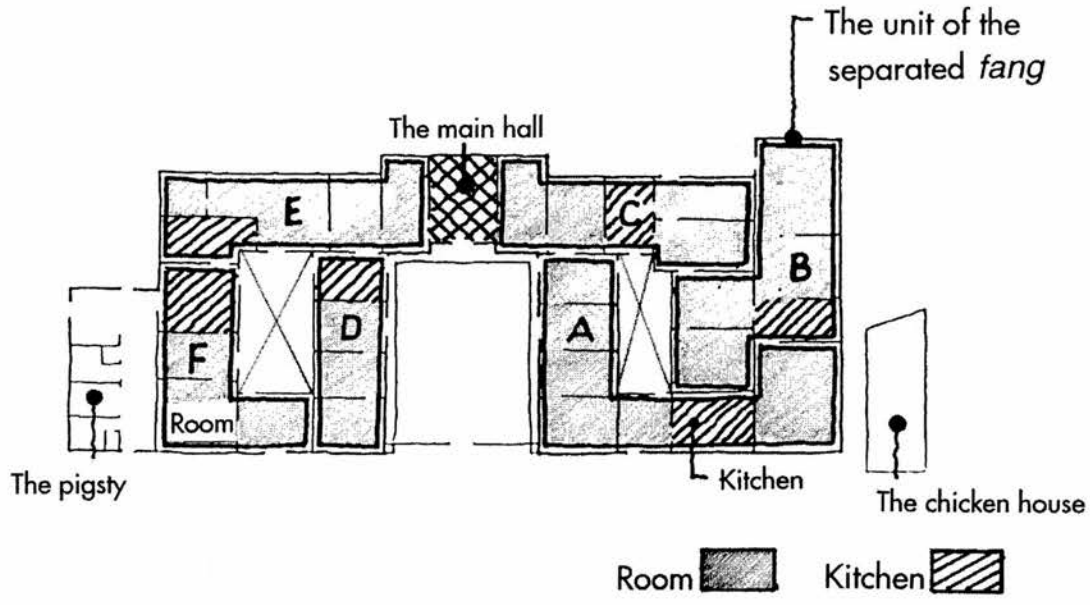
6 The grandmother of Sung 松場敬, for example, was a feet-binding lady who married at 12 years old, and started taking over all the duties of livelihood at 15 years old after her parents-in-law were dead. She went to work in the fields from very early morning to very late afternoon, but her husband just smoked opium at home without doing anything. Unfortunately, according to the cases recorded in The Folkway of Taiwan (Vol. 4 , No. 8, 1944), it was not unique in that time. (a.11 1993: 67)

This division of the cultural duty applied to all women including those in a rich lineage. However, though the meaning of their symbolic role was no different from that of any other women in low social levels, the performance of labour that could be taken over by their more available maidservants, or servants, made a major difference in reality. Yet the women in rich families still had to carry out supervisory duties, because all their maidservants, or servants, could be treated only as their "agents performer" - the results of the performance would still be their total responsibility. As almost all the tasks, especially the responsibility of most hard domestic labour in the exterior court, were taken care of by servants and maids, responsibility for them was mainly taken over by the head-servant instead. The practice of this divided domestic labour that was supposed to be the duty of female family members within the quartet-courtyard house confused neither the principle of gender boundary or "women master the interior", although women were only directly in charge of very small part of the domestic area in reality. As to the triad-courtyard house, as most of its domestic spaces were treated as the interior sphere, it allowed women to do their duty in almost all indoor spaces of the house without any confusion over the gender boundary. But the domestic labour in the street-house would be clearly confined in the interior division because its exterior division given to "outsiders" and men's business.

As the performance of domestic tasks, especially in the kitchen which was the main centre of domestic consumption, should always be directly and completely under the domination of the domestic authority of the female household-head, the location of the kitchen, was therefore determined by any change in living arrangements of the female household-head. It was normally located at the left rear corner because the female household-head usually lived in the left rear room - the noblest place for a room in the house, but this was not the only necessary location for the kitchen in the spatial organisation of the house. This argument can be clearly proved by the evidence, as figure 7-7 shows, that new kitchens would be built in the room next to the bedroom of the new female household-head of the independent *fang* after separation. In a rich family, the kitchen could even be moved out of the interior court because the cooking normally was taken over by professional cooks, but location of the kitchen still remained close to the room of the female household-head or her deputy (the deputy must also be

Fig. 7-6 Women had to sit on stools to pound rice due to bound feet did not allow them to stand long (from a.11: 68)



(The real case of Lin family's separation)

Fig. 7-7 Kitchens were freely built in all proper rooms after *fang-separation* (from b.22: 99)

a woman because of the division of cultural duties), as described in The Dream of the Red Chamber [7]. This tightly symbolic connection was shown in the street-house as well, where the kitchen was arranged in the first court, either behind the room of the female household-head at the end of the first *chin*, or in front of it at the first room of the second *chin*.

From the cultural viewpoint, needlework [8] seems to have been more important for women in rich lineages than in poor lineages, since it was treated as a part of the female-education, and became an important indicator of female virtue. Though in some circumstances - e.g. in most bourgeois and poor families - needlework could very possibly provide a women with an important side job to improve the domestic financial situation, in other cases needlework might just be treated as a medium for showing off one's talent, or as a strategy to keep women diligent. This was especially true in the case of a rich household where needlework was the women's only real housework since most of their domestic tasks had been taken over by maidservants and servants, and only very little stamina and time would be needed for the duty of supervision. Nevertheless, it would still carry the same symbolical significance for women in all levels because of the rigid cultural identity of female role, and the high estimation of the female virtue.

Apart from the purpose of keeping diligent, women would often congregate in the rear hall for the needlework under the supervision of the female household-head. It could possibly be for the purpose of quality and quantity control when it was a part of the resource of family income; but it also might be encouraged by another more important consideration, that the congregation forced female family members to have more communication with each other, allowed less rumour and insidiousness behind the back, and avoided unnecessary immoral behaviour happening in secret. The needlework became not only an important medium of female virtue, but also

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[7] The kitchen, which served only interior family members, was moved into the independent court of the sister Feng 鳳姊, the daughter-in-law who was assigned to be the deputy manager of domestic finance (Chapter 51 of the book)

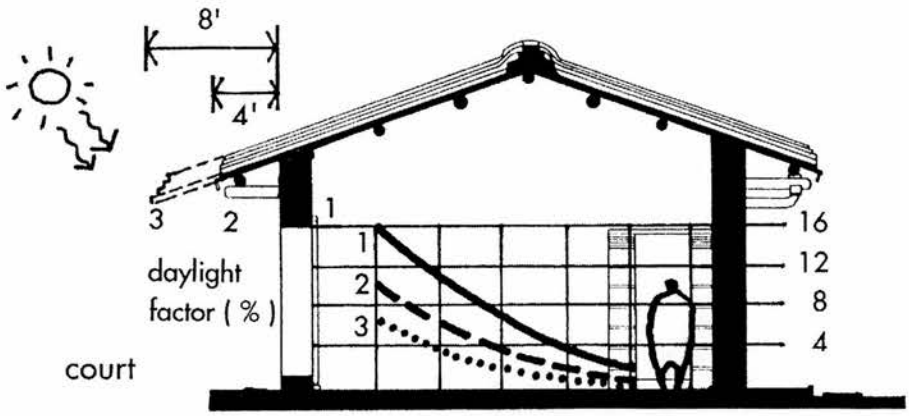
[8] Needlework in Taiwan included no weaving but only embroidery because Taiwan never really produced silk. This could be partly due to the climatic conditions in Taiwan which did not suit mulberry trees for silkworms, but it is believed to be much more influenced by the market-dominated economic agriculture .(a.11 1993: 66)

became a necessary tool for domestic management; and led to the rear hall becoming an important space for domestic discipline and social intercourse. Domestic acts, even though they were defined by cultural recognition, could, in practice, very possibly be changed under the influence of the condition of the physical environment of the house. For example, as it could be encouraged partly by the better physical environment (cooler and lighter) (Fig. 7-8), partly by the better mental condition (staying in one's own territory enabled better mental-defence against opponents, and allowed a sense of security), it sometimes became hard to prevent most light domestic tasks, including the needlework, being performed at each verandah. This was especially true in the case of the triad-courtyard house where its territory marker was more convenient for the verandah in each side courtyard. In addition, the rear courtyard must not a suitable place for women's domestic tasks in most conditions because of its highly sacred space, but also because of its poor physical environment, combining high temperatures and unpleasant turbulence during the daytime (Fig. 7-9), and the uneasy psychological condition of being exposed to the backless, vacuous, and less sovereign, common space. Nevertheless, it must, theoretically at least, keep its visibility to allow the same degree of supervision. This meant that this occasionally convenient and practical alternative did not let the women completely escape from "combat-ready" tension under unexpected and frequently intrusive inspection.

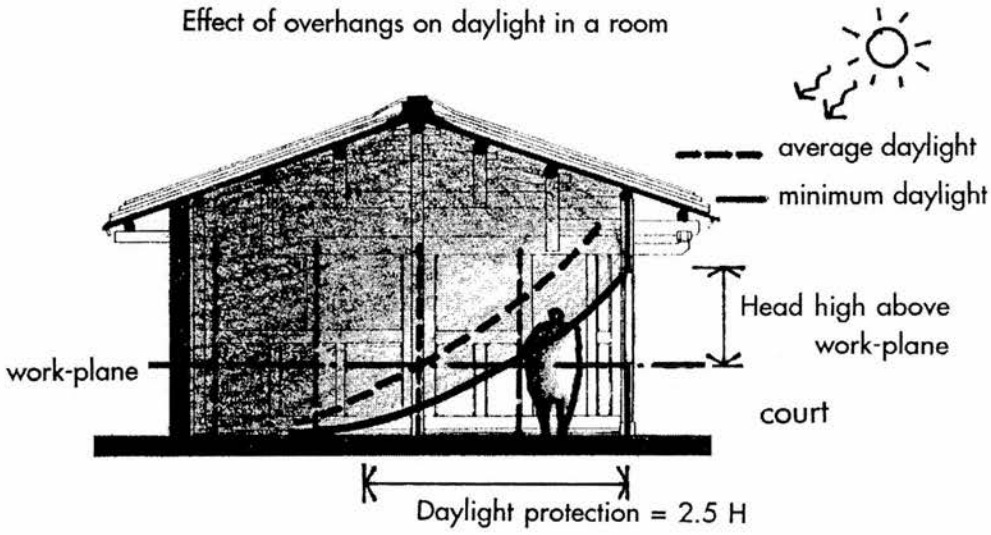
Overall, as service was the only purpose of domestic labour for women, the economic function of women's domestic labour was denied and neglected, even though women's side jobs, especially needlework, could very possibly make a good contribution and improve the financial condition of the family. The productivity of women never led to women themselves achieving financial independence, nor did it have anything to do with their domestic position under patriarchy.

7-3 Education - space for the cultivation of roles

Education in Taiwan in the nineteenth century was classified into five

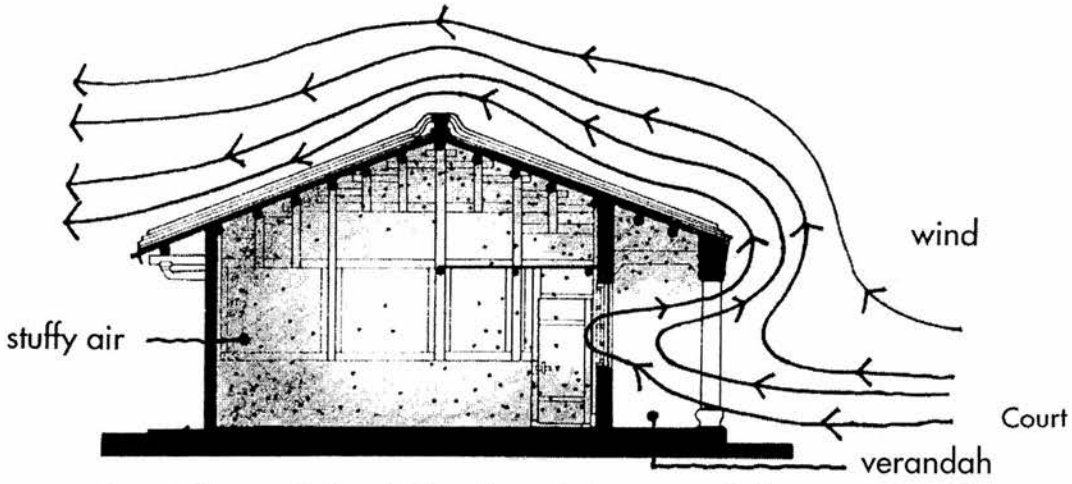


Effect of overhangs on daylight in a room



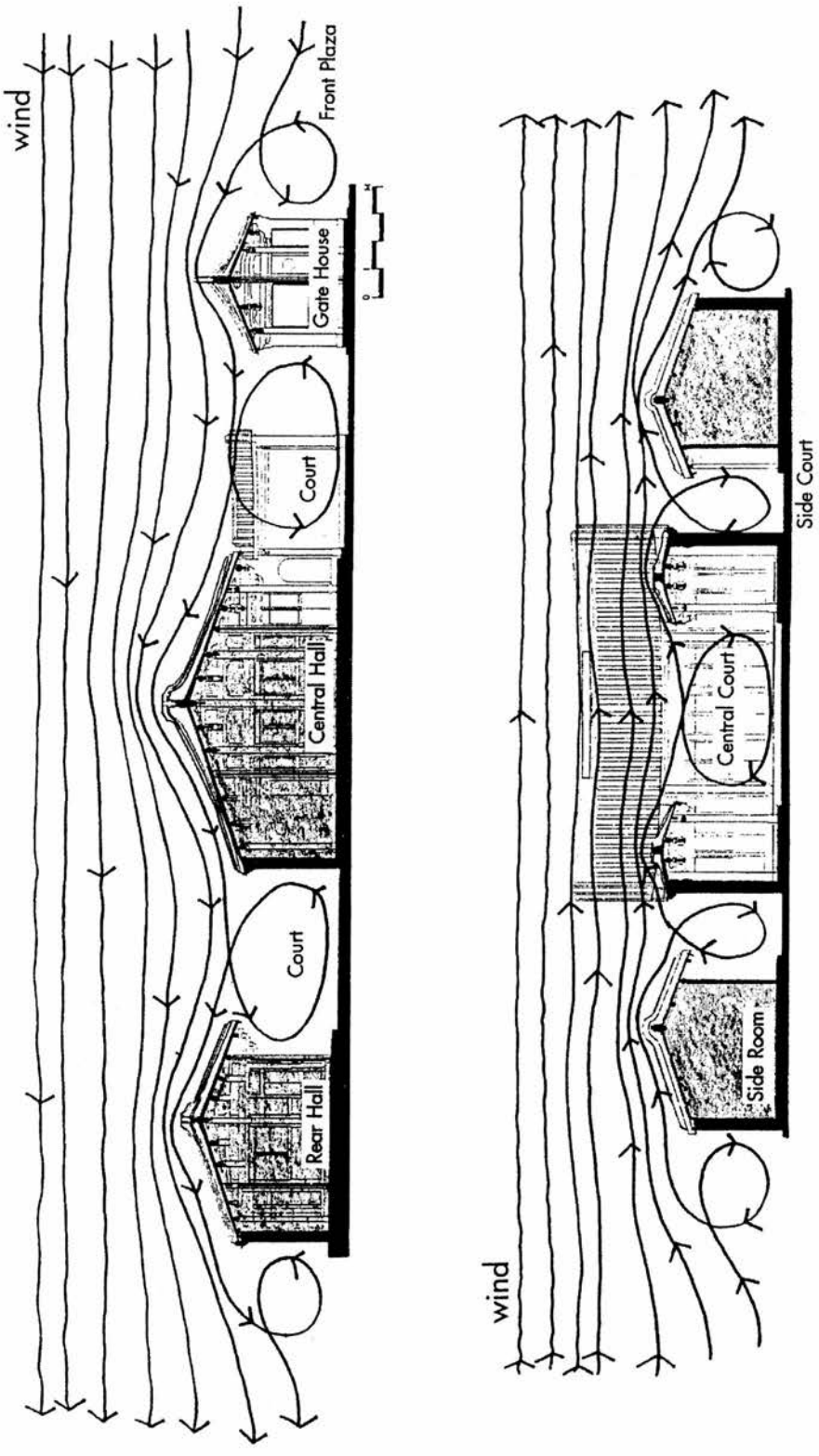
Adequate daylight for tasks

In terms of daylighting, the room begins effectively of the edge of the overhang and the window wall merely defines the usable portion of the space



An opening on windward side only results in poor ventilation

Fig. 7-8 Bad physical indoor environment of the courtyard house (after b.46:181, 306)



A low building placed in the wind ward path of a tall building produces a large amount of turbulence between the two

Fig. 7-9 Turbulence occurred in the courtyard house (after b.46: 180)

different systems for the different demands of differently aged children [9]. The private school, that was established by the neighbourhood or the lineage itself, was informal but also the most common institution for primary education. However as the ultimate purpose of all kinds of school education was essentially the men's official examination, this, in addition to the conceptualised gender discrimination closely associated with women's virtue (cf. section 3-2), meant that only boys were emphasised in all systems of education. Girls normally were not only rejected even by private schools [10], but almost all of those female students in that very small group would be forced to drop out, in order to concentrate on learning domestic tasks in the interior court, after they were about twelve years old. Most of them, therefore, would be only very roughly educated, though they were already much luckier than most other illiterate women (a.11 1993: 104). This gender discrimination was never relaxed for women in Taiwan, even in the later era of immigration when the more open Western attitude about women was gradually imported into the island, and presented a challenge to the continuing exclusion of women from all formal education in Taiwan [11].

According to the Chinese division of cultural duty, female education should concentrate on the knowledge of female virtue and the skills of domestic tasks, on being a responsible daughter-in-law and a competent mother (cf. section 3-2). There was usually no exception to this rule even in the case of the more "formal" education given by professional tutors inside the house of a wealthy family, because it concerned not only the happiness of the daughters themselves, but also the honour of the family. The other

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9 These were five kinds of schools in the immigrant Taiwan: *ju-hsueh* (the Confucianism) 儒學, *i-hsueh* (the charity school) 義學, *she-hsueh* (the social school) 社學, *shu-yuan* (the district school) 書院, and *shu-fang* (the private school) 書房. (h. 48 1988: 211)

10 According to the survey held by the Japanese in 1898, there were only sixty five female students who educated in private schools in that year, that was 0.2% of all students in the private schools.(a.11 1993: 104)

11 Two earliest female schools in Taiwan were established by western priests at Taipei in 1884, and at Tainan in 1887 (The earliest Chinese formal school for women in Taiwan was established by Liu Meing-ch'uan in 1888). They were totally free with full boarding, even sponsored travel fare, yet they never really succeeded in attracting Han people. Almost all 45 students in Taipei and 18 students in Tainan in their first year were aboriginal girls. The failure could be blamed on: (i) the school refused to accept bound-footed ladies, (ii) the school had no wall for proper gender boundary, and (iii) the immigrants still insisted that women should stay in the interior court and take only domestic female education. (a.11 1993: 99-102)

reason for their being excluded from even this more "formal" home education could be that the main hall usually was the "classroom" for this teaching (h.64 1982: 601), and girls had to be strictly restrained within the interior court after they were six years old which also deprived them of an their opportunity to go on with their study. Thus it seemed that avoiding illiteracy could be the only certain guarantee given by the female education. The practice, that taught by the traditional "female-education" for the appropriate cultural role, was much more practical than academic knowledge in the female education system. It could, therefore, be treated as a kind of preparatory training for all their possible positions and status in the future, and was generally taught by a girl's mother, or at least completely overseen by her mother. Domestic education for women, thus, became a very confidential, and sacred duty for a mother in the interior court.

The house itself, especially for women trapped in the agnatic lineage, definitely played an important part in this home education, as argued by Roxana Waterson (d.37 1993:167):

> ...Rules about the uses of space provide one of the most important ways by which the built environment can be imbued with meaning; reflexively, that environment itself helps to mould and reproduce a particular pattern of social relationships. This production of meaning may take place, firstly, through the positioning and manipulation of objects in space, and secondly, through the human body itself - its placement in, movement through, or exclusion from a particular space, or in people's spatial interactions with each other...rules about the uses of space provide, in all cultures, a potentially powerful means of encoding aspects of social relationships, and causing them to be "lived" at a tacit or subconscious level by the actors themselves...

As it was mainly concerned with skill and with dexterity training for practical domestic duty, and with learning the domestic discipline required by their cultural role, domestic female education, therefore, could be a one-to-one tutorage, taking place at any place according to each actual process of performance, inside the interior court. That led all the interior court becoming a classroom for this home education, all senior women could be the teachers, and all real daily events and objects would provide live teaching material. However, apart from learning ethics and skills, this informal and irregular education in no fixed place, which was (i) given by the

mother who was not necessarily qualified to be a teacher, (ii) under the confidential processes, and (iii) sometimes the "live teaching materials" could hardly avoid imparting a negative attitude to humanity, could very potentially result in serious side effects, and cultivated defective personalities, for women from generation to generation.(cf. section 6-2).

Boys were much less influenced by this system of domestic education. Although their so-called "enlightening education" would still be begun in the interior court, by their mother, before they were seven years old, a boy's formal education would be looked after by the father, and would take place in the exterior court, or at the formal school outside the lineage. And because it was less concerned with the formal national examination, this "enlightening education" would be treated just as an episodic, and often a neglected part of domestic education to the Chinese, no matter how much this improper enlightenment could really influence a man in his growth (cf. section 6-4).

In short, the whole space of the interior court was a complete classroom for this domestic education, and only women were involved to any great extent as both teacher and students. Men, to a considerable extent, were excluded from this system. However, though this so-called "home education", that strictly bounded in the limited interior space with "teaching" exclusively for and by women, really strengthened domestic ethics and guaranteed female skills of domestic labour, it could, too, affect the personality development of both sexes. It, although it was allowed less importance in Chinese education system, could have both negative and positive influences on the traditional values of the Chinese kinship system.

7-4 Sociality - space for leisure and display

7-4.1 **No place for women's recreation**

Strictly speaking, there was no function of recreation allowed in the essential concept of the traditional Chinese house, because too many sacred and ritual meanings and missions were defined for the Chinese lineage, therefore there should be no place for recreation even in the exterior court or for women in the interior court. Women, theoretically,

should have almost no time for leisure in most bourgeois and poor families, because even though domestic tasks were looked after by dutiful daughters-in-law, most other women who were "off duty" would still have to share lots of extra domestic tasks in order to help, or do their own never-ending works in that period. Also the virtues of diligence and endurance, attributed to female cultural role, suggested that leisure could be the sign of being lazy or escaping one's common duty, and would be a sin. There was no exception for women in the rich lineages, even though they would have no practical labour to undertake and had more potential leisure time in reality. Therefore, most women in the Chinese household could only more or less survive by recalling the last festival and anticipating the coming festival, because the festivals would become the only spice for the never-ending domestic tasks in their routine lives. The festival itself could hardly be a recreation, and it actually even caused more extra domestic work, but the atmosphere of festivity did help to release the long-term pressure. The occasional relaxation of rigid routine allowed women to have more freedom such as going to worship in the temple. Festivals indeed became the most important medium of recreation and amusement to women in a tightly restrained patriarchy [12].

The venerable mother of the descent group would be the only exception to both ethical and practical restraints, and possessed privileges which allowed her to enjoy occasional recreation, such as playing chess, listening to professional story-telling or singing, and enjoying sociality with friends, as classic fiction described (The Dream of the Red Chamber - Chapter 20, 43, 53). Nevertheless, there was no unique place for women's recreation in the interior court, because all other activities in those multipurpose spaces would take priority over recreation, and the recreation for women did go beyond the cardinal limitation of the division of the cultural duty. The rear hall, which clearly belonged to the female household-head, and was theoretically more open to all domestic female members, became the most likely place for the purpose of recreation. But as formerly discussed, the use of the rear hall was largely the private domain of the female household-

12 Festivals provided not only just time-points but also gave meaning to and motivation for consumption. One's expense in the feast is no more judged by its practical usage or value, but only its symbolical meaning and ostentatious nature. (h.28 1991: 16)

head, and so its function of recreation, was ill-defined and was limited to only the specific social group related to the female household-head.

It might be presumed that women - including wife and concubines - in a rich lineage would be allowed more leisure for recreation, but this could reasonably result from consideration of the consumption structure of "vicarious leisure" (Teblen Thorstein, 1967) [13], rather than through a different recognition of their cultural role, because their domestic labour remained a symbolic part of their culture, and had absolutely nothing to do with the functions of domestic finance. Almost the only duty for them, especially for the concubines, was to embellish the life of their consort, and even their consumption was expected to enhance or match his status and social position. However, one must know that no matter how harmonious this relationship between them and the "owner" could really be, their behaviour and taste were dominated and restrained and not actively self-determined.

The family garden of a wealthy lineage might be the only place specially allowed for recreation in the traditional Chinese house, but it was clearly separated from the ordinary lives by having its sphere concretely bounded by walls, whilst its main entrance was absolutely independent within the exterior area (refer to Fig. 5-20). The garden was usually built for showing off the host's wealth, taste, and virtue, matching his social status and position. The family garden, therefore, was the monopoly of the male household-head, which not only generally excluded women, but also allowed access to no other male family either (b.20 1984: 171). A woman would be only be allowed to gain access by invitation or on some special family occasions.

7-4.2 **Only informal social intercourse was allowed for women**

According to the divisions of cultural duty, all formal social intercourse of the household, acknowledged by the society, was the responsibility and privilege only of the male household-head. All other social intercourse, even

13 Except wife and concubines, the category for this structure in a rich lineage could include family mentors, tutors, servants, and maids, etc., who were not brought into the lineage for production but for consumption. (h.28 1991: 20)

that promoted by other male family members, could only be informal behaviour requiring the male household-head's tacit approval. Therefore, the formal social intercourse of a lineage could only occur in the main hall for serious issues with important people, and in the exterior study or the garden with closer friends over less serious or more secret matters. It was solely the "business" of the exterior court.

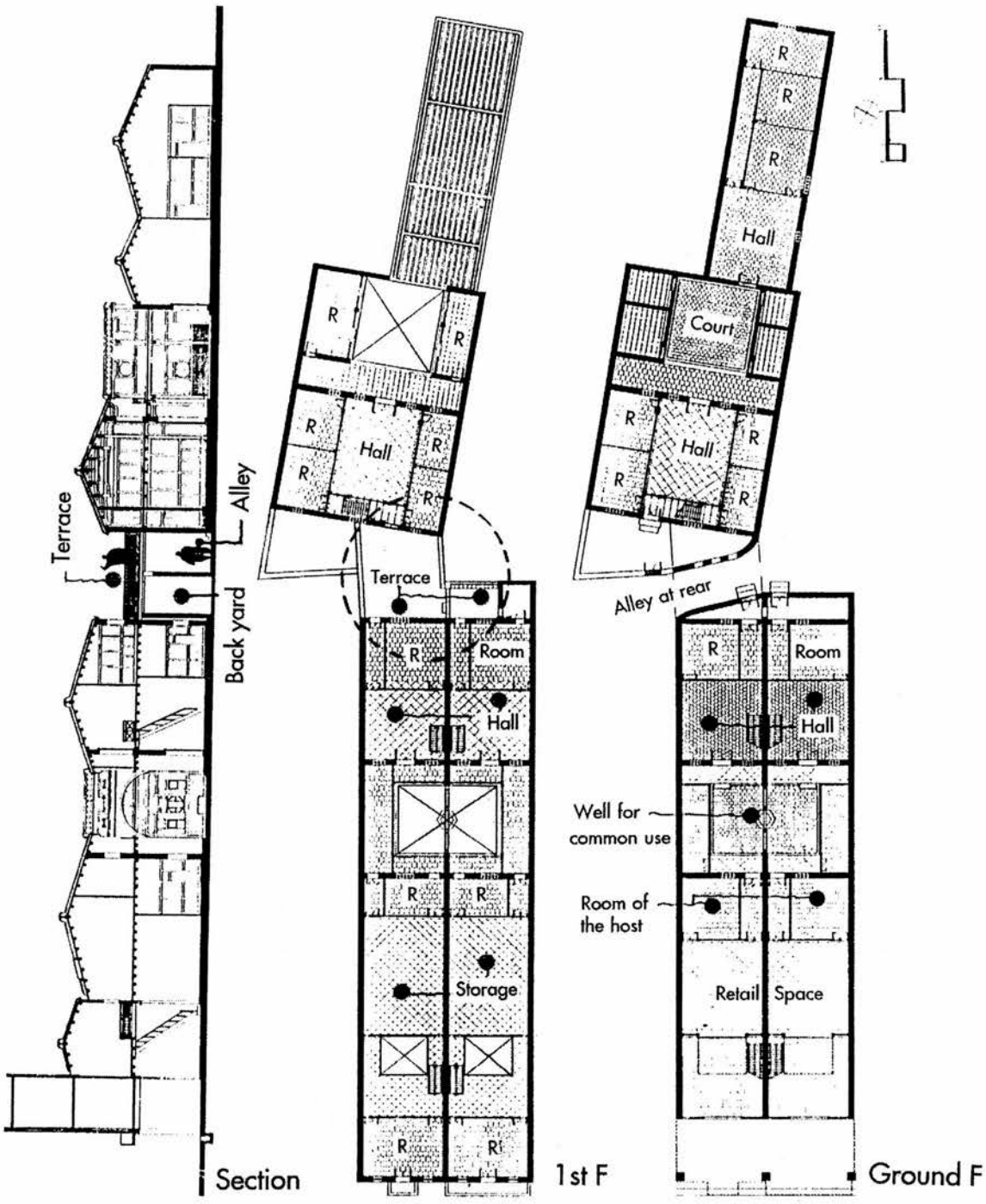
As, throughout her lifetime, a woman was entirely confined within the two interior courts of the houses belonging to her own father and to her husband, and was spiritually restrained by the conservative norms of society, the social intercourse of women was very limited and unvarying. There were normally only two kinds of social intercourse allowed for women. The first was the domestic social intercourse with other female family members. Such intercourse, however, could hardly be successfully harmonious under the "competitive reward structure". It usually happened only in the kitchen or the rear hall, and not at any place or with certain people by choice. The second form of social intercourse was that with their female relatives, especially their own mothers and sisters. Here again both the restraints imposed of inconvenient communications (not only geographic concerns but also social restraint) and never-ending domestic labour would severely limit their occurrence. Even so this form of social intercourse, that usually happened in a personal room with intimate blood relatives, was easily viewed as secret selfishness or immorality by other legal kin and might lead to suspicion and potential conflicts. In practice it was rarely encouraged even in the interior court. Overall, women in traditional Chinese society had little freedom of self determination in respect of social intercourse inside the house.

Nevertheless, there were still two kinds of ambiguous social interactions which happened in the interior court. The first one was the interaction of the female family with the roles of three *ku*s and six *po*s (cf. section 4-3.6). Strictly speaking, this was not social intercourse, because the nature of the relationship was not one of friendship but of a group providing professional services to a "client". However, as they were the only outsiders "allowed" to stay in the interior court and were the only source of information from outside the family, and provided for the client's most private needs, they could be unilaterally treated as a loyal friend easily, and

became one of the most important social interactions for women in semi-secret. Because they were the most important source of immoral domestic scandal as well, intimate relations with them were forbidden by most of the severe and honourable lineages of the Confucianists. The second one was the social intercourse with "sworn" sisters. This was mainly introduced by the notion that it was a dishonour if there was no, or only a few family members to cry for one's death. Women who had few relatives, therefore, would increase their semi-family by building up a sworn kinship (a.1 1979: 89). However, though it was not actually forbidden by men because it could also form part of the social resource for the husband's social climbing, it was not easy for women to achieve, because there were very few chances for a woman to visit others outside the house, or to make friends outside the circle of her kinswomen.

In short, to men women's social intercourse was informal and dangerous, because it could only happen in the sphere of men's personal property, and potentially threatened the stability of internal relationships. Therefore, women's social intercourse was basically discouraged, and was strictly limited to personal spaces (such as the rear hall for the female household-head, her own room for each daughter-in-law) inside the interior court, with the most limited groups (mostly only their own kinswomen). This can be demonstrated by the fact that spare rooms for guests were more commonly prepared in the exterior court in the quartet-courtyard house, and in the first *chin* of the street-house, but were very seldom found in the triad-courtyard house, because of its almost "all interior" plan which allowed less availability for outsiders. There was very rarely a guest room prepared for female guests in the interior court; female guests usually could only stay in the room during the evening, with the woman who was visited. This suggested that women's over-night visiting was discouraged, because even someone as close as a married daughter would be treated symbolically as an outsider rather then a member of the natal family when she visited her own parents.

There was, however, a rather contradictory exception in the case of the rear terrace of the street-house. It was located at the topmost floor, side by side with the neighbours' house, as shown in figure 7-10. Though this space did allow more potential use, there is no evidence to show that it



(147 & 149, Chung-shan Rd., Lu-kang, 1800 - 1850)

Fig. 7-10 The rear terrace at the topmost floor in the street-house provided more chances of social interactions for women (from b.12: 63)

arose from different spatial concept of the courtyard house. Anyhow it created more opportunity for social intercourse with equivalent ladies living next-door, with less social stigma, because it was concentrated in the deepest side of the interior court, and was therefore less threatening of female virtue [14].

7-4.3 **Decoration and display**

In the traditional Chinese courtyard houses, decoration was not a key mechanism for conveying spatial meaning, but was essential for reinforcing and emphasising the spatial symbols of the godhead and sociality. Most of the clues and signs of the distinction of the spatial position would be lost when the decorations no longer existed.

Decoration was definitely concerned with spatial ritual, however the regulation of architectural decoration was more confused and difficult to enforce in nineteenth century Taiwan, because only limited restraint could be imposed by the Ch'ing law in this immigrant society. This, such as *yen-wei* (swallowtail) - the form of roof-ridge only allowed for the house of scholars who had succeeded in national examinations - were welcome by Taiwan's rich families, might be partly the result of its remote and isolated geographic location (distant from the imperial centre of administration), but available wealth is believed to be the more practical reason which allowed the Taiwan immigrant greater freedom, leading to exaggeration and display. Even though there were only a few principles of practice to be agreed and followed by craftsmen, (b.31 1977: 101) the main rules could still be classified. These included the rule that "the relative themes were adopted for different spatial positions in each court, and a similar theme was used for each complete indoor space; the same characteristic stories were adopted on the symmetrical main structure, and its extended contents, as the patterns of

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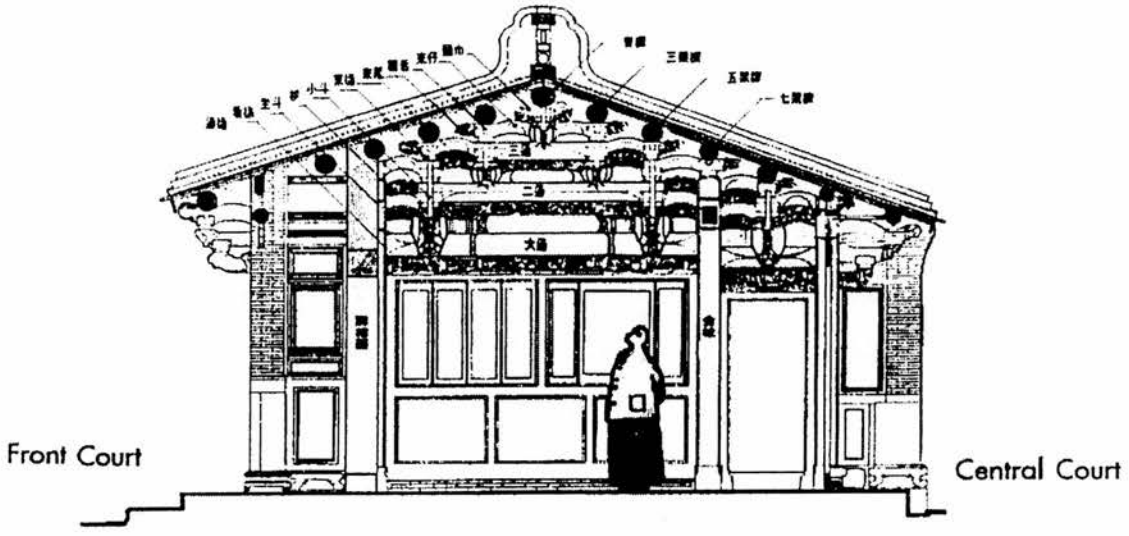
14 The rear terrace in the street-house was an ambiguous space, because neither its architectural nor domestic ethical reason could completely satisfy the reasonable explanation. It was the roof of the lower residential space, but it was not inevitably necessary to be an open-air terrace; it was the only available outdoor space for domestic work and exercise of unmarried ladies in the interior court; it also was convenient for social intercourse of woman because of its directly adjoining the next-door neighbours. But none of these was the concern of male values, and the domestic tasks were supposed to be dealt with in the indoor hall.

lucky animals and plants, would then be adopted on each above sub-structure; and the most important was that all themes must match the status and the position of the "host" (b.31 1977: 86 - 97). The gods of the door were not necessarily awesome "armed" guardians, they could be the feminine figures of court maids for the temple of the goddess (because the goddess, worshipped in the temple, was the host of the temple but not the people -usually men - who served in the temple); and the figures of officials with lucky emblems could serve as the gods of the door for the scholars' houses. As most architectural decoration was set at a place higher than where it could be clearly appreciated and as there is no evidence that the pictures were enlarged for better visibility (Fig. 7-11), it seems that the symbolical meaning of the whole piece of decoration was more important than its individual beauty (and they were not usually very delicate). Lineage values were universally shown in domestic decoration with themes of blessing, filial piety, wealth, political achievement, and prosperity, illustrated from historic stories and legends (Fig. 7-12).

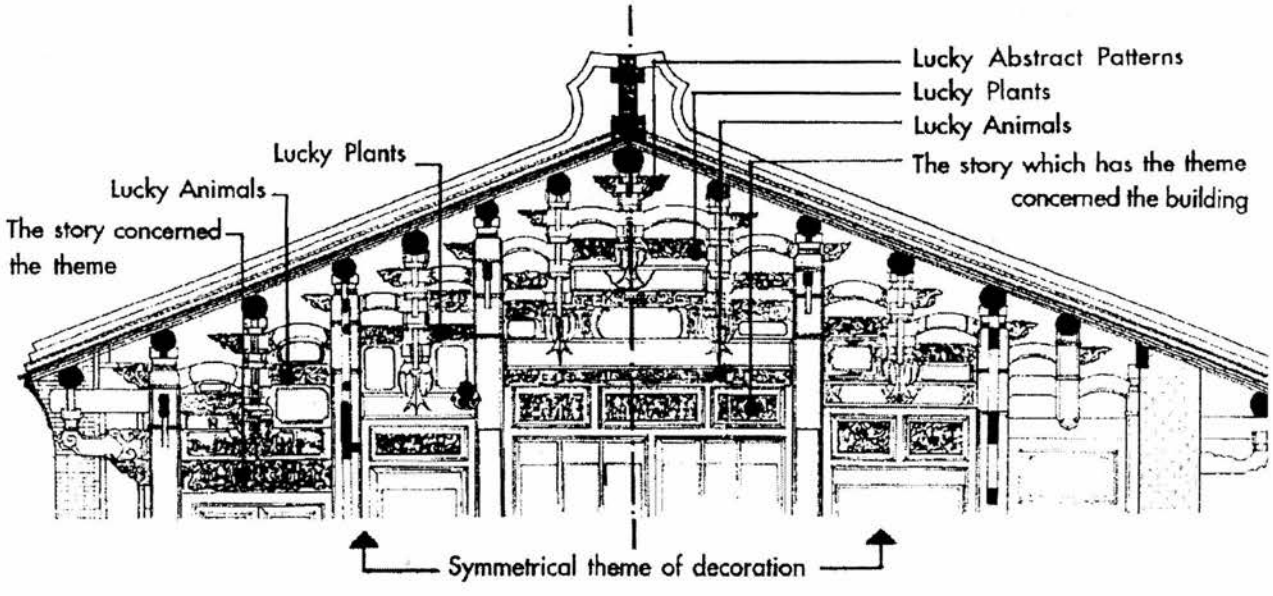
Basically, the decoration was subjectively decided by an individual's economic capacity and social position, and was objectively decided by its relative spatial position in a house, and would be partly related to the *feng-shui* (charmed figures such as *pa-kua*). As all ritual space was also space for visitors, the demands of ritual and display were perfectly matched in the house, the decoration's ostentation demonstrated the host's status so his social position became a primary consideration in architectural construction. As decoration was only displayed in places that outsiders could see, the main places for decorations, apart from the facade of the building, therefore, would be concentrated in the exterior court in the quarter-courtyard house, the first *chin* in the street-house, and the main hall as well as its first-layer side hall in the triad-courtyard house. The hall, which was used to honour the gods and the ancestors, and for welcoming guests, was the most delicately decorated as the focus of the whole house. This is why decoration must be understood not only in terms of its necessary ritual meaning, but also in terms of its purpose of display.

In contrast to the delicate quality and bountiful quantity of the decoration in the exterior court, the interior court could only have very few and rough forms of decoration, even in the rear hall and the facade of all



(The gate house of Chai-hsin villa, Taichung, 1847)

Fig. 7-11 The decorations were at the places higher above one could clearly appreciate (after b.10: 66)



(The hall of Chai-hsin villa, Taichung, 1847)

Fig. 7-12 The system of the decoration's themes on the beam structure (from b.13: 117)

of decoration here would still concern only the male household-head and not women: (a) The theme of decoration should concern the master rather than the user; the interior court was just the space for women to use, and did not belong to them. (b) Apart from the hall, the functions of all other spaces were multipurpose and changeable, so fixed themes of decoration for a unique user would reduce the flexibility of the space, and allow less alteration for the organic growth of the lineage. (c) As most private territory, especially the room of each person, allowed only the most minimal and informal social intercourse with the most limited group of female kinswomen; its decoration would have very little influence on the host's social standing. And (d) The godhead here was much weaker than in the exterior court, and only few indices of decorations were needed to match its religious symbol.

In summary, a house's decoration in the interior court, including the selection and deployment of architectural materials, was simple, rough, and cheap, due to its limited concern with ritual and utilitarian function. Also the theme of the decoration would not reflect the female roles, because of their humble position and "accessory" roles. And the indexes of decoration allowed only different extents, not different principles, for both the rich and the poor, because of their shared understanding about the spatial concept and female cultural role. Therefore, apart from the furniture, there would be little difference between rooms or kitchens in the interior court of most traditional Chinese houses.

7-5 Privacy - space for psychology and physiology

7-5.1 **Confused and difficult personal territory**

People naturally protect their territory from unwelcome intruders, and in order to protect their loved ones (Sommer, 1969 - a.33 1986: 799). All kinds of signs and barriers, therefore, were adopted for surround territory and claim sovereignty. However, though that personal territory allows an ideal distance to keep away from improper physical contact, it is not absolutely necessary to have physical occupancy, but territorial markers are sufficient in order to demonstrate ownership (a.33 1986: 802). Territorial behaviour can also be understood in another way as ensuring a proper

abstract distance for preventing others to obtain one's information (a.33 1986: 802). It, thus, has weaker association with one's really occupying a "territory", one only has to well control the media of communication between oneself and the others in order to build up either (or both) real or fast impression. The response to a so-called "intruder", therefore, would be decided by each individual circumstance, the relationship of the people concerned, and the understanding of the contact as suitable or inappropriate, friendly or dangerous, and would be strongly influenced by social customs and value judgements.

Under the hierarchy of divisional management and supervision, there could be only two kinds of territory in a traditional Chinese house. The "primary territory", a space for collective ownership and common use for all members of the certain group; and the "secondary territory", the secondary space within the "primary territory" for certain members' customary using. Here the right of customary use was not exclusive, it was an assumed sovereignty or ownership (Altman, 1975 - a.33 1986: 803). Territory which was either completely public or completely private never, or rarely, existed in the traditional Chinese house.

For women, their territory would first of all be confirmed for their whole group by evident and concrete forms of territorial markers (the second door and the solid walls). As a result the interior court was clearly identified with the women and was understood by them in terms of their own internal hierarchy and competitive structure. This became not only the biggest gap for communication between men and women but was also the biggest obstacle to women's consciousness-raising and to combating sexism.

Inside the interior court was a completely "primary territory". All women in here would theoretically share the equal right of spatial use. Each of the individual spaces within the sphere, such as the verandah at the front of the room, the rear hall and the rooms, even the side courtyard in the triad-courtyard house which allowed much more personal occupation and customary routine use, etc. would have been considered as "secondary territory", because all that territory was still equally available for all members of the interior group, in theory. As it was not exclusive to any one person or groups' use, sovereignty was weaker whilst the territory therefore allowed

more interaction, especially that between the authoritative female household-head and her daughters-in-law owing to her more unpredictable and frequent aggressive intrusion. The completely chained indoor-corridor, especially in the triad-courtyard house, could be one of the most concrete physical spatial factors which caused this weak territorial sovereignty.

Nevertheless, though it might be just an "accidental" side-effect of the original spatial concept, the territory marker of personal territory associated with the side courtyard in the triad-courtyard house, as figure 7-13 shows, was very convenient, and harder to ignore. Its inconvenient circulation for access, allowed each of its spreading side courtyards more character of personal territory, even though the space was not specifically marked by any female user. Not only would more personal activity, such as drying clothing, pickling, nursing, or teaching children etc., be more freely allowed here in practice, but most unnecessary contact, malignant spying, or accidental disturbance, would be reduced because it was more or less like directly exposing oneself to the user's personal property. There was also a longer warning time which reduced embarrassment and allowed for greater privacy. However, though it was still hard to identify any space as completely private, this strong territorial marker would reduce, or even completely stop, almost all kinds of potential inter-movement and communication, leading to potential misunderstanding and suspicions between female family members, and made each female family become much more like an individual, or a separated unit, in the family.

Compared with the triad-courtyard house, the interior court of the street-house would have had less complex arrangements of personal territory. However, its overlapping spaces, connected only by a steep ladder, still allowed a longer warning, and avoided direct embarrassment. Also fewer people of a same group shared the same floor allowing simpler domestic interaction, and let its "second territory" act somewhat as personal territory.

In the case of the quarter-courtyard house, by contrast, the complex of personal territory was confused and ill-defined since it allowed more people to share the same "primary territory" causing more unexpected contact. Territory markers were less effective; the boundary of its

"secondary territory" was inevitably vague, variable, and more conflicting. Because of the greater immediacy, unexpected and embarrassing intrusions could easily be caused by anyone, no matter whether on purpose or not. However, its verandah still played an important function as secondary territory. Even though the main purpose of the verandah was as a pathway, it was the interface or medium space, between complete godliness (central court), the primary territory (all other parts of interior court), and the personal space (room). All its columns, different levels and pavements, and the clear line of stone edges still possessed some characteristics of the territorial marker, and encouraged more friendly manners and most personal light tasks were undertaken here. (Fig. 7-14)

7-5.2 **The room, the last defence of privacy**

Rooms had to possess some characteristics of "private territory" in a traditional house, because almost all women's daily physiological demands had to satisfied within that limited space. Yet no room in the interior court could be built as a suite. The room, just as any other space in the house, was a rectangular space without any further addition. Any variation of use could only be made by moving furniture.

As the room was just a part of the entire building, the measurements of the structure were decided from the perspective of the group as a whole and not according to individual demands. The Chinese, therefore, developed two measurements systems for different scales. The *lu-ban* ruler 魯班尺 (1 *lu-ban* ft = 29.7 cm) and the method of *chi-pai* (feet) and *chun-pai* (inch) 尺白寸白[15] was the scale for the main structure; the *men-kung* ruler 門公尺 (1 *men-kung* ft = 42.76 cm) was the scale for furniture and architectural components (e.g. doors and windows). All of them had their own measurement to create good fortune and long life, and avoid distress and illness, according to the *feng-shui* theory. In contrast with the former system of measurement that related more to issues of symbolical meaning and of the hierarchical position of the architecture, the *men-kung* ruler allowed its "lucky number" to match the measurement of human

15 It was the most secret and exclusive measure system of carpentry based on the complicated idea of the "orientation" and "eight-trigrams", and only orally taught by the head carpenter to the only apprentice who would success to his title.(f.32 1983: 77)

(Tu residence, Ta-chia, 1890's)

Fig. 7-13 Side court in the triad-courtyard house owned strong characteristics of personal territory (from b.17: 199)

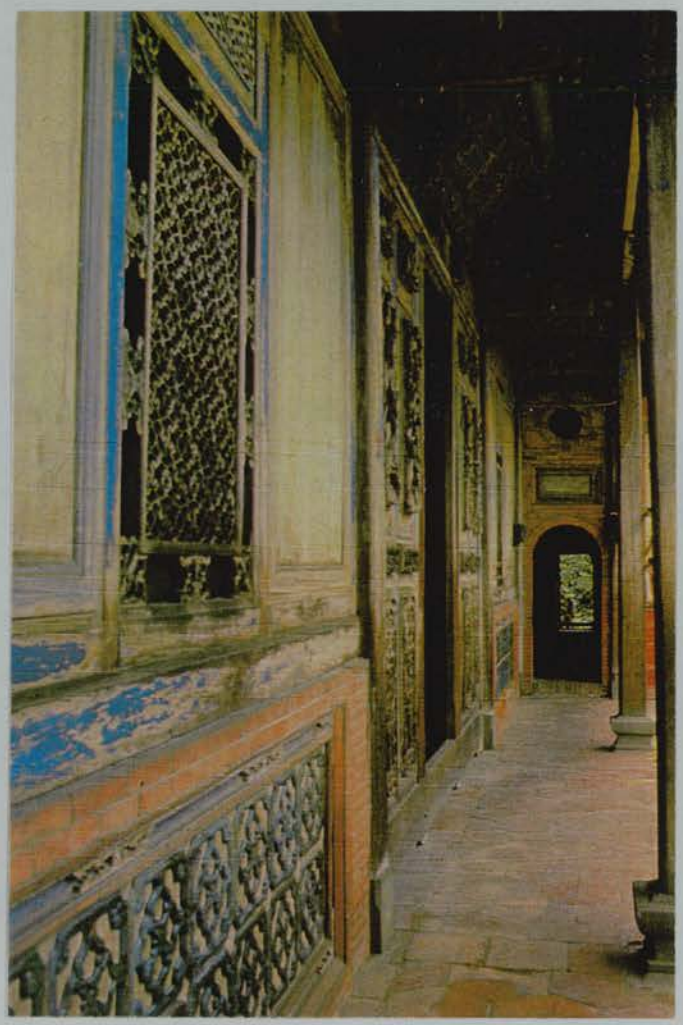


Fig. 7-14 The verandah played an important function of secondary territory because of its clear territory markers (from b.17: 199)

(Lin mansion, Chu-shan, 1895)

engineering, and allowed all furniture to have more human scale in a plain, geometric, indoor space. For instance the bed had its own roof and door (or curtain) to define its most intimate human space (Fig. 7-15). Since only the moveable furniture, which could be freely changed according to various uses, could easily satisfy each functional requirement, furniture became the most important architectural element in the room, even the symbolical functions of the interior decoration of the room were expressed by the furniture, and not by the building itself (Fig. 7-16). However, there is no evidence to show that even the *men-kung* system ever considered the female user according to their physical difference.

As almost all of a woman's personal functions had to be carried out in the room, it was normally arranged as a form of condensed home. In this limited rectangular space, as figure 7-17 illustrates, the front area was arranged as the exterior space for her personal worship, dining, limited social intercourse, or light personal housework; the centre area was arranged for semi-confidential affairs, such as sleeping, dressing, and makeup etc.; the rear area, which was normally concealed by a curtain, was for the most confidential physiological acts, such as excretion, washing during the menstrual cycle, and bathing. In some rich families, the furniture could be arranged in the same spatial sequence in two neighbouring rooms, and the room nearer to the rear hall could be treated as the exterior area, and so the other two functions could take place in the inner room (a.20 1992: 32). Even inside the bed, the space might be sub-divided by its own door, curtain, screen, and different level of floor, as figure 7-17 shows. This allowed for different degrees of privacy. The maidservant usually slept in the sandwich cabinet under the bed, or in the space between the screen and curtain, to serve her mistress in the evening.

The door of a room was the front boundary between family members and servants, and the last defence between the user and the other family members. Usually maids of all work were stopped by the threshold of the door, and only personal maidservants were allowed to serve inside the room. The bed and the cleaning area behind the curtain would be absolutely private territory; even the husband did not generally gain access when the space was in use, even though this behaviour had more to do with the taboo of female "uncleanness" than respect for privacy. As all

The urinal in the front area of the bed

Fig. 7-15 Traditional Chinese bed with its own roof and door

Illustration to the drama Forgotten Tales from the Zen Adherents (Tianqi period 1621-1627)

Illustration to the drama The Thorn Hairpin (Jing Chai Ji) (Wanli period 1573-1619)

Furniture arrangement of room in the Ming Dynasty (the print of Xi-hu) (明刻西湖二集版畫)

Fig. 7-16 Furniture was the most important architectural elements in the room (from Orientations January, 1991)

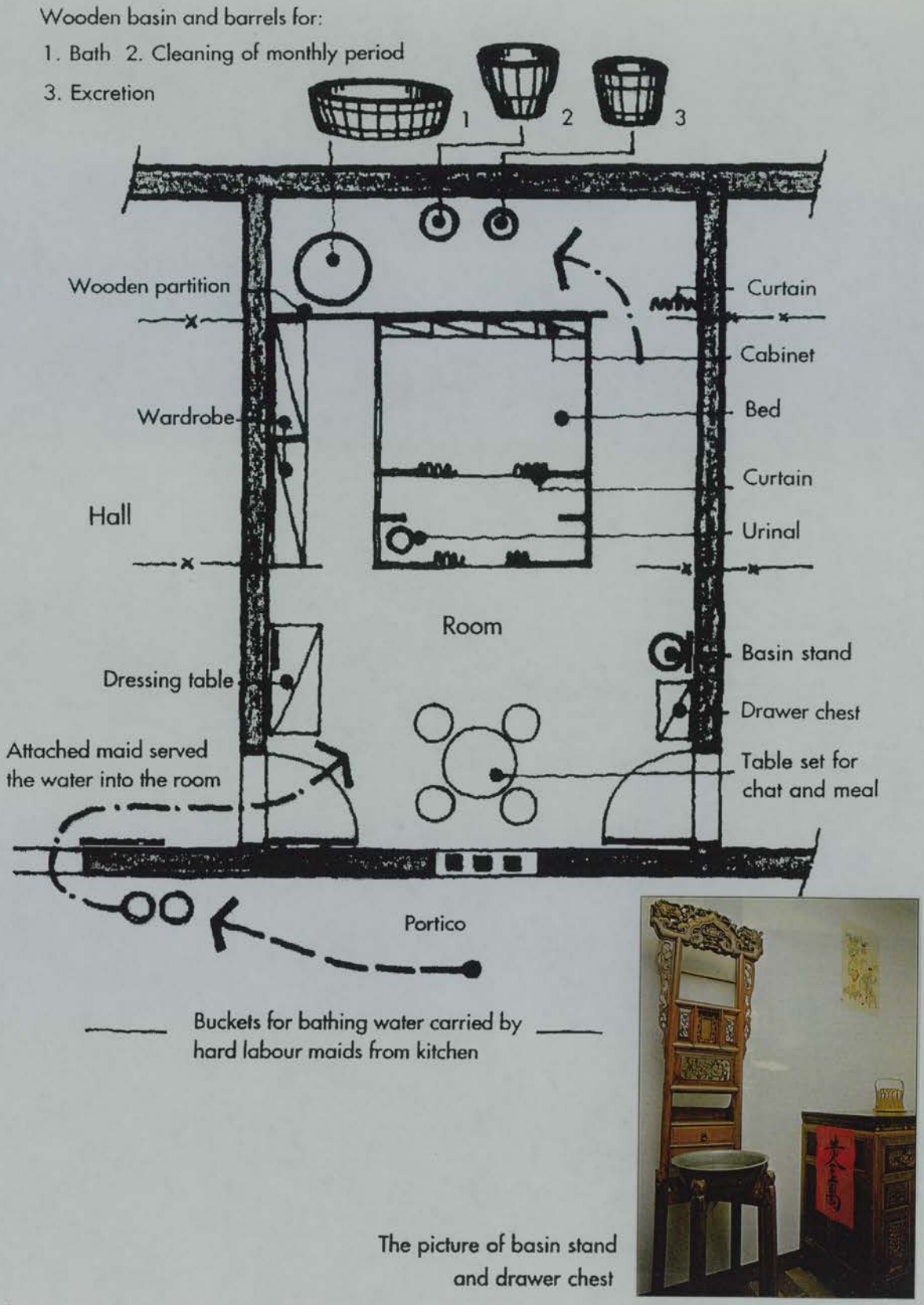


Fig. 7-17 Typical interior arrangement of the room (according to he recall of the ancestral mansion of Professor Chiang 江韶瑩)

doors and windows of rooms were completely opened in the daytime, it was polite to make tread heavily or to cough on purpose so that the access would be noticed, and to keep one's eyes down in order to avoid embarrassment. As a drawn curtain was a clear sign of a space's being engaged, to open a curtain suddenly and rudely could be seen as the most serious accusation of a women's immorality, or the strongest insult and disdain to the female user.

The fact that a woman's personal needs and possessions were confined to her room, and distance for one's mental well-being was really difficult in the space beyond the room, suggested that the room was still the only space for private territory, and was the only available place for escaping from "sensory overload" (Staulex Milgram, 1970) [16], even in the triad-courtyard houses which allowed more workable "second territory". To women, freedom of behaviour in one's own room became the minimum necessary for relieving "mental crowding" [17] (Freedman, 1979), even though real privacy could only be of a minimum extent and guarantee.

The room, in the traditional Chinese house did not provide a good physical environment for almost any personal physiological needs. As figure 7-8 illustrates, it was, especially in hot and humid Taiwan, unsanitary and smelly because of its bad ventilation and the effect of warm indoor air [18]. Moreover, the lack of a running water and drainage allowed for only the simplest form of personal hygiene (usually women only used one basin of water for wiping the face and body, also washing feet on an ordinary day, and only took a real bath for special occasions - a.20 1992: 129). Even so, washing brought moisture into the room. Also, darkness and stuffiness meant

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16 Mental stress can result from too much stimulation. This is mostly caused by unpleasant and disturbing high-density living and inharmonious relationships. (a.33 1986: 812)

17 Crowding is a subjective feeling of being bound by an insufficient and unpleasant environment. Though real density is significant, it often has more to do with the situation and the real relationships of all the people concerned. It means that social density has more influence than biological density (a.33 1986: 810).

18 Slaked lime was used in the slop baskets to dry and remove the smell by rich families (a.20 1992: 53). A simple wooden bucket with a wooden cover was used in most families, so women or maids had to pour it into the cesspool, or give it to the professional collector, and clean it outdoors, in early every morning before the men got up.(Taiwanese folkways, Tou Hou Taka Yosi, 1942: 55)

that indoor space and time were limited. All these practical deficiencies were an encouragement to stay in the outdoor space for longer periods, and "coincidentally" matched the ethical injunction to stay indoors during the daytime.

As curtains allowed unpredictable disturbance from the overbearing female household-head, other self-invited family members, and even classless maidservants, sex between young couples in the room became extremely tense and inevitably perfunctory. Such conditions and privations were, it would seem, taken for granted, because domestic ethics and female chastity were still the top priority. Thus rooms, just like all the others in the house, reflected domestic ethics and etiquette.

7-5.3 **The Kitchen, the place best for physiology but worst for psychology**

The kitchen could be treated just as "primary territory" in most bourgeois or poor families, because all daughters-in-law still had to work on common domestic tasks there. Some of their physiological needs had to be satisfied here as well. The kitchen, as figure 7-18 shows, had convenient access to water of waste disposal (nearer the well in the backyard or big vessels inside for storing water), it thus was the main place for bathing for all family members in most houses. However, there still were risks to female chastity, because it was much opener to the public than the room in spatial relationship and its interior arrangement. On the other hand, it let one feel a sense of exposure to the spirits, whilst one's imagination could be inspired by its godhead and taboo. As a result, a woman normally had a bath only under the cover of darkness in the very late evening after all the men had gone to bed, with all doors and windows carefully closed. The alternative was an inconvenient form of bathing in their own rooms. To reduce the time taken to bathe became a very practical consideration to women, because it reduced the risk of the losing virtue, and of causing inconvenient extra labour. Notwithstanding such difficulties, the kitchen remained the only place for bathing in most houses of low social levels, when the room was usually shared with too many family members, and the indoor space became insufficient for privacy.

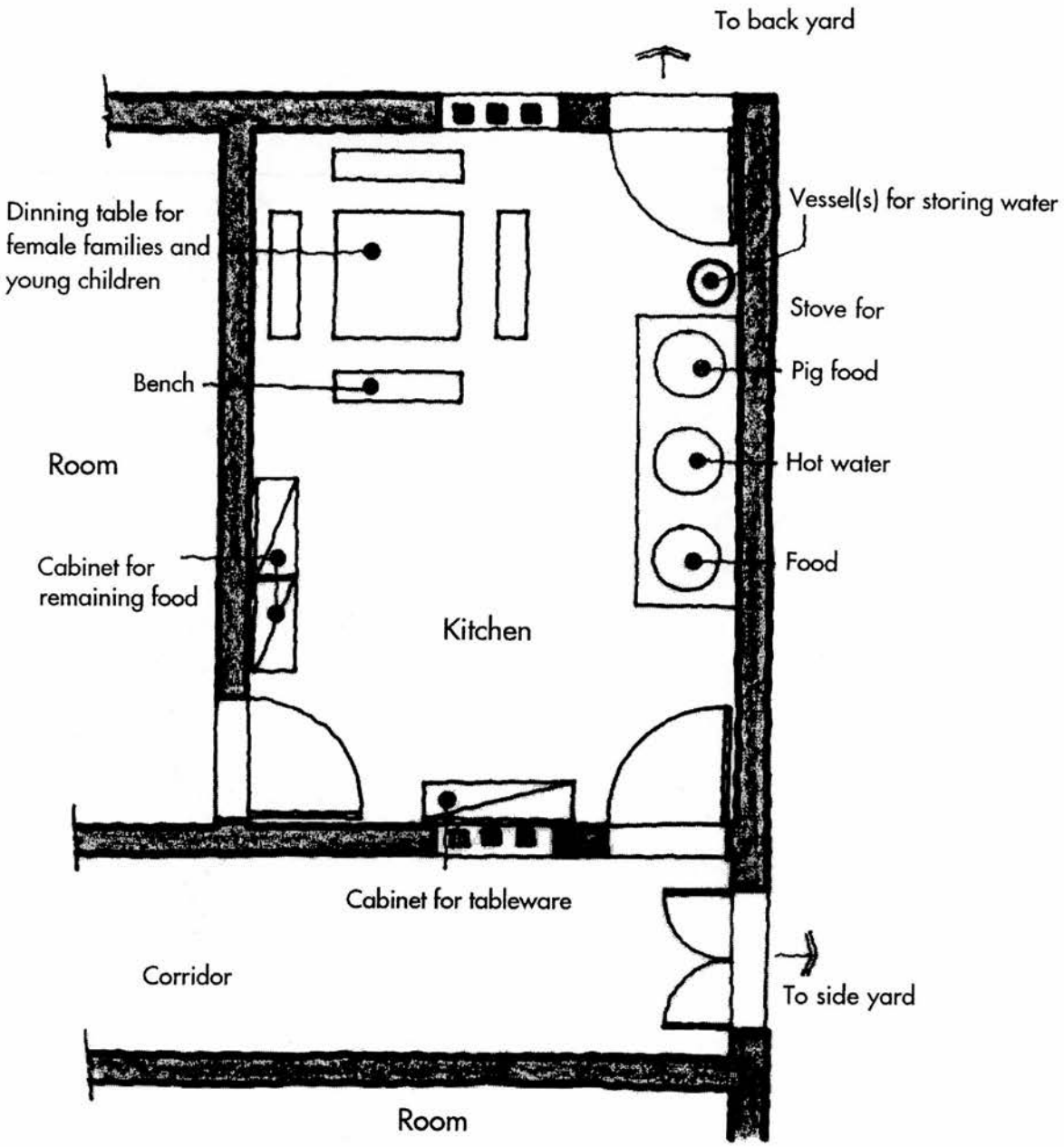

Fig. 7-18 Typical interior arrangement of the kitchen (as fig. 7-17)

The kitchen was also one of the most important places for dining. Dining, in the traditional Chinese family, even for the simplest nuclear family, was very clearly separated for two sexes. Women would have their meal at a different time (after the men's), at a different place (men could dine in the hall or the study, women dined in the kitchen or their room), with a different group (men dined with *fang*, and women dined with other women and young children) and in a different way (men dined with certain companions at a certain time, women could dine with uncertain companions and at unspecified times). It was common in rich lineages for a woman to dine in her own rooms (maidservants and servants dined in the kitchen). The meal boxes would be prepared by the professional cook, according to each woman's status, and would be sent to each room and served by her personal maidservant. Though daughters-in-law did not cook themselves, they were required to serve their mother-in-law her meal in her room first, and then had their own in their rooms individually after that; or were invited to have meal with their mother-in-law in her room. Only at the feast for family union on special annual occasions (such as New Year's eve, the Mid-autumn festival and the birthdays of the male and female household-head etc.) were women allowed to dine with men at the same table, or to have feast with other female members in the rear hall.(refer to the plot of The Dream of the Red Chamber - Chapter 22, 53, 71)

In short, the kitchen might have a more independent and professional characteristic to separate it from the daily lives of female family members in the rich household, but it would not only be the main place for the whole-family domestic labour, but also for the functions of physiology (dining and bathing) in most bourgeois and poor family. However, as it was characterised more as a "primary territory", and as the priority of use always belonged to the senior family, it did not allow for much confidential behaviour for junior or humbler women. Unfortunately, though the mental stress was inevitable in this limited space, the kitchen was still the most necessary place for most practical lives, and it consequently became a most complicated place of meaning and function.

7-6 Summary

Gender division was always the primary factor in determining human relationships in a Chinese family. Different gender groups were strictly forbidden to communicate directly; even female family members were restricted in the way they could meet with their own brothers in the domestic area. Therefore, the traditional Chinese house provided almost no space for both sexes to use at the same time under normal circumstances, and this included the private room (except in its function as a sleeping place for married couples) and the place of dining. The clear separation of the interior court and the exterior court became the most distinctive discriminatory feature in all Chinese houses.

The spatial concept of the traditional Chinese house derived entirely from male values. Such values were closely related to a patrilineal orthodoxy and embodied a degenerative form of sexism. This led inevitably to a situation in which the domestic space failed to cater sympathetically for the gender difference of the female family, even though, in contrast with men, women were the "real" occupants of the house in terms of the time they spent there and the functions they performed.

Since the spatial organisation made no practical allowance for the biological role of women, nor was it really adapted to meet the needs of practice of the duties of their cultural roles, women had little alternative but to learn about the inherent spatial ethics and passively adapt and limit themselves to the given space as "an individual insensibly undergoes a cultural apprenticeship" (d.37 1993:167). They, under all conditions, had to act with total propriety under the quasi-religious restraint of un-verbalised taboos of space and the physical limitations of inappropriate and inadequate spatial provision. This was the same philosophy as the Chinese applied to the use of chopsticks - whereby people had to adapt, through learning and practice, to the use of the tool which was not designed to meet any specific kind of food.

Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that the domestic space of the traditional Chinese house did logically suggest that it was determined by "what a woman should be". In other words, the effects of the women's

cultural role can be discerned within the traditional spatial model though expressed by the more dominant male values.

The following chart shows the extent of the connection between the domestic spaces and the domestic function of the traditional Chinese family, summarising the arguments of former sections,

	Ritual	Labour	Education	Sociality	Privacy
The Interior Court:					
1 Rear hall	●	●	●	●	●
2 Court	●	○	●	●	○
3 Kitchen	●	●	●	●	○
4 Room	●	●	●	●	●
The Exterior Court	●	○	●	●	○

●...Main function for whole household
●...Main function for each division
●...Side function
●...Weakly concerned
○...Forbidden

According to the chart, domestic labour was apparently the major cultural purpose within the whole household. Serving men was the primary function of women; other functions or activities involving only female groups or individual woman were entirely subsidiary to this main function. Women's privacy was given the lowest priority. This did not mean that the identified spatial principles were exceptional to the exterior court, but men, not restricted by the limitations placed on women, would have more alternatives and freedom both within and outside the home.

That women's privacy was not respected within the traditional Chinese house derived from the idea of the father's ownership, but responsibility could also be attached to two other main cultural influences in

the Chinese family; the excessive male anxiety concerning female chastity and the effect of the "culture of the elder" [19]. The former complex led directly to domination by an overbearing female household-head in the name of domestic discipline and ethics; the latter led to an attitude which despised sex, and indirectly and sub-consciously encouraged the intrusions from an inconsiderate female household-head. These not only prevented immoral sexual affairs, but also left the normal sex of young couple in a state of tension most of time, and led to even the most personal rooms in the traditional Chinese house becoming sexless zones (sex, to some extent, was permitted only in the bed behind its curtain but not "in the room"). All spatial organisation of the traditional Chinese house, for example (i) the entirely open front of the room facing onto the closed court in the quartet-courtyard house, (ii) the completely linked indoor-corridor especially in the triad-courtyard house, (iii) the side-by-side rooms linked by a narrow indoor corridor, with only a very unsound-proof wooden partition wall (that normally could only blind the visual contact in between) in the street-house, and (iv) the boundary lines between homogeneous family members, including the side door of the room which generally had only a curtain instead of a wooden door or any physical blockage in most of the house, etc., directly reflected this cultural effect, and made the traditional Chinese house a "house without secrets".

Without doubt the house of a rich family would normally allow more medium space (as semi-separated court for each female family, or allowing two neighbouring spaces for one occupant's room) for better mental well-being, and allowed female family members to have more privacy. This, however, did not result from a different attitude towards the privacy respect, but could be more reasonably to be caused by the necessities of "vertical" categorical division and the more difficult domestic discipline with more "family members" living together with complications of status and position.

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19 Based on the values of the filial duty, the authority in the traditional Chinese family derived from elders, so that the family was managed with the value judgement of physical and psychological condition of senility. As it only believed the wisdom of experience and implicit loyalty towards authority, all contributions of new knowledge and the physical practices of youth were despised and denied. (e.30 1988: 13)

Strictly speaking, none of the three models of the traditional Chinese house in Taiwan was really responsive to the special local physical environment associated with an island-type climate. The spatial organisation showed little modification from that which had developed in the totally different environmental conditions of the mainland.

During an era in which the ideal of the lineage formed the apex of all values, the house was under the strict domination of orthodoxy; even in the case of the triad-courtyard house it was hard to infer that this form was influenced by considerations of the physical environment, even though its dispersed form of spatial organisation did offer some improvement. As a result, most domestic spaces in the traditional Chinese house in Taiwan lacked a comfortable and pleasing physical environment for daily lives. This was a special burden for women who had to stay at home all day long, and had no option but to use the insufficiently functioning room for all their biological and cultural needs. "Coincidentally", that the bad indoor physical environment "forced" the female family members to stay and work outside the room during the daytime perfectly matched the demands of domestic ethics that allowed a room only to have the minimum time and opportunity of private use.

Compared with the quartet-courtyard house's centralised spatial organisation, and the street-house's overlapping and limited indoor space, the triad-courtyard house seemed to have the most humane spatial arrangement. Despite the fact that it allowed more potential damage to the values of the patrilineal descent, it did provide a much better physiological and psychological environment for the female user. However, it would be dangerous to conclude that its spatial model derived from a humanistic consideration for there is no architectural theory or direct evidence to uphold this result.

In summary, from the viewpoint of architecture itself, the spatial organisation of the traditional Chinese house in Taiwan was based upon inappropriate, or at least insufficient, spatial considerations. It not only paid little attention to the prevailing physical environment, it also ignored the real demands of gender difference under the strict domestic patriarchy. Yet viewed from the values of the agnatic descent, it provided a successful

model for domestic ethics and discipline, because all inward supervision and management could be effectively strengthened by its spatial relationship of the "panopticon", and allowed all domestic affairs to be well restrained so as never to extend beyond the sphere of the interior court, no matter how bad the domestic situation might become.

The spatial concept of the traditional Chinese house that tacitly revealed the message of sexual discrimination against women, reminds us repeatedly that men's over-anxiety about women's chastity was the essence behind the male values which identified the female cultural role, self-hypnotised by the men's own logic and double moral standard. To the women in the nineteenth century Taiwan, meant being be allotted kinds of roles for different cultural functions, or for different biological needs, but, on the surface at least, could seldom being fairly treated as a complete human being or respected as an unique individual. The spatial model of the traditional Chinese house (in Taiwan), from a viewpoint of the socio-anthropology, therefore could be reasonably assumed to be merely as a collective camp of domestic labour (for serving men's daily lives), or a moral prison of sexism (for reinforcing men's lineage value), and the most impossible cage to escape from (for ensuring men's exclusive privilege).

Chapter 8

Conclusion and general perspectives

8-1 Summary

There are eleven points to be summed up in the conclusion of this research.

1. The Chinese characteristic of "praising antiquity and despising the present" allowed traditional values to dominate 19th century Taiwan

The Chinese way of thinking was biased towards the experiences and traditions of the past. Ancestral experiences were never allowed to be challenged by the perspective of the present. Any such modern viewpoints had to be seriously restrained and examined, and could be accepted only if it could be proved that such views derived directly from - and carried the authority of - traditional values. To the Chinese, such authority derived from the *Tao* - the answers for all life (d 5 1990: 174-178)

This complex produced an attitude towards gender which had not essentially changed for thousands of years, even during the active Tang dynasty (a.9 1986: 119-122). Specifically, the spatial meanings and principles of the traditional courtyard house had not evolved since the model had been formalised in the era of the Chou, and the rules had been regularised in the Han dynasty. Any additions that took place in later years were used simply to reinforce the "truth", or merely to adjust practice to a local context. The essentials were not changed.

In the case of Taiwan, the effects of a combination of an inferiority complex induced by the immigrants' poor origins, and a superiority complex gained from the immigrants' great economic achievements led the immigrants to persist with ancient traditions and, indeed, to act more in a more explicitly "Chinese" manner than the mainland Chinese of the same period. As

a result, traditional Chinese values, the values placed on the lineage in particular, dominated the lives and practices of immigrant Taiwan in the 19th century, and the universal and constant characteristics of this value system [1] provide clear clues by which such practices can be traced back to - and understood in terms of - an ancient root tradition.

2. The principles of traditional Chinese houses in Taiwan had great similarity

Though the theory of *feng-shui* could have originated in pre-scientific ideas about the environment and human beings, and its practice could be seen as a secular form of the orthodoxy of Confucianism presented by the rites of "magic power", its superstitious and rigidly over-adoption in almost all aspects of architecture after the Ming dynasty made it become one of the most passive forces to restrain the Chinese architectural development from evolution and creation.

The nature of fatalism led to Taiwan immigrants implicitly believing in and cautiously obeying this semi-religious principle of architecture, and led to their houses revealing great degree of similarity. That meant even the houses for the low social levels were restrained in the same well-known and regularised links, even though not directly restrained by the law or the abstract values of orthodoxy. Therefore, though the traditional Chinese house in 19th century Taiwan apparently had its own local characteristics, the essence of the architectural principle of traditional house was never challenged. That made the traditional Chinese houses in 19th century Taiwan rigid, anti-creative, and socially restricted, also their unanimous denotative signs were easily interpreted.

3. The Chinese attitude towards gender was stereotyped and discriminatory

The stereotyping of biological sex and the stereotyping of cultural roles (the social expectation of gender character) let people believe that

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[1] The great unanimity of both abstract values and concrete practice of Taiwanese could partly result from the "stage" and the background of the immigration that (i) Taiwan is a small island (about 2/5 of the area of Fujian), (ii) most the immigrants came from the same homeland, and (iii) the serious development of Han society concentrated in almost only one century.

the biological differences of sex were large and natural (a.33 1986: 755). And the less information about the specific individual, the more categorical stereotypes were doubtless accepted. However, to understand the female sex was almost impossible for male Chinese under the strict boundaries of gender and sexual suppression within the family. There was no encouragement to react against the cultural recognition for the special time-space condition in the early stages of Taiwan immigration.

Since the gender stereotype over-simplified the classification, over-exaggerated the differences between them and over-emphasised the similarity of each classified female semi-group, it became the foundation of gender discrimination for men, and of the way women came to think and feel about themselves. The effect of gender stereotype became the biggest obstacle to the social co-operation between the sexes in the Chinese family throughout history and, in particular, during the 19th century Taiwan immigration whilst the wealthy society of Han people was formed [2].

4. The identity of women's cultural roles never changed, even under the special conditions of immigrant Taiwan

The dramatic variation of the social role of women in immigrant Taiwan, from "the society of sexual difference" to "the society of sexual discrimination" (Ivan Illich - a.25 1988: 20), resulted from the huge change in numbers of the female population. However, because this false sexual equality was only the advantage that women "accidentally" gained from the specific time-space of unbalanced population, it could not be understood as the evolution of gender idea or male values. The cultural roles of women could have been only adapted for utilitarian purpose but never changed for humane reasons in traditional Chinese society. Under cultural restraints and conformity, the essential male attitude towards women never really changed according to one's wealth or social position, even though what they really acted in daily lives could be big different.

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2 This discriminative attitudes towards woman, especially to those from the social elite, must have some links with Taiwan's successful economic development. Despite the cultural factor of the influence from the "mother" tradition, men's financial ability could more or less let the relative position of dependence of sexes in a family be more clearly distinguished, and led to men being more authoritative in the lineage and the social structure.

Social and political activities, such as outdoor labour, travelling, and taking part directly in rebellions or armed fighting etc., which were permitted for women in the earliest stages of immigration, were later withdrawn and denied by society, whilst traditional forms of restraint, such as foot-binding and traditional "female-education" were re-adopted, and female virtue was re-emphasised at all levels of society. The traditional concept of gender discrimination completely dominated Taiwanese society, and women were almost entirely restricted to a domestic role once more after the 18th century.

5. The traditional Chinese house was primarily for the purpose of the sacred duty of male descent

To the most Chinese, the lineage was the ideal of all social values, everything else being ultimately subservient to it. This idea was supported by the architectural perspective that the ancestral hall was normally housed at the most important place in the spatial organisation, the idea of "immortality" was closely linked with the limited lifetime of the house itself, and the *feng-shui* of the house directly concerned the prosperity of *fang* etc. Traditional Chinese houses therefore could be seen as serious and dignified places for the sacred duties of reproducing offspring and worshipping ancestors. Any other function of the house for biological needs in daily lives could be treated as less important or potential threatening this value, and should be sacrificed.

The traditional Chinese house was thus a place of perpetual ritual. Even its most intimate rooms were spaces of domestic ceremony and decorum rather than homely comfort and relaxation in most of time. This was especially true for women whose freedoms were submerged under layers of supervision, from the senior family members, from jealous and prying "spies", and from heaven. Because there was absolutely no place for them in external society, the traditional Chinese house became a prison for Chinese women from which it was impossible to escape.

6. The traditional Chinese house was a place full of conflict and contradictions for women

A woman could be identified as a fully social being only when she married a man, and became a part of himself and his kin. This meant that

even motherhood could be greatly influential in a family, a mother's status could be admitted only when her husband's, or her sons', assumption of the household-head, not simply through her giving birth to sons. As a result, women had no alternative but to subject themselves to the authority of male values in order to confirm their status and position within a patrifocal framework. On the other hand men were not only relieved of most domestic labour, but were able to escape totally from female domestic conflict.

Anyhow, as only the individual relationship of attachment of each woman to her "master" within the family was important and emphasised, and not interrelation or co-operation between women themselves, in the values of descent. And because normally there was only a very weak basis for women's friendship caused by (i) their different origins, (ii) polygamous domestic structure, and (iii) the unavoidable competitive inter-relationship, it was very difficult for women becoming vengeful within the compulsive, close, and limited domestic space. This led to the house from which it was difficult to escape being filled with conflict and contradiction for most women in most Chinese families.

7. The domestic space of the traditional Chinese house was divided for people not for function

As the spatial concept of the traditional Chinese house served the demands of the male value system rather than the real needs of life, the traditional Chinese house was divided into closed and separated divisions for different groups of people and not on the basis of function. Thus each spatial division had to be neutral and multipurpose in order to meet all the daily needs of the users. As a result such division was less concerned with the comfort and convenience of the occupants or with the potential mental problems caused by the users' compulsory interaction.

Since, however, such inconvenience of daily living was accorded relatively little importance and affected only the humble women at home, it was treated as a minor spatial "defect" in the traditional Chinese house. The traditional Chinese house therefore presented a harsh environment for the domestic lives of the occupants, most especially women who had to exercise great self-restraint in order to adapt to inadequate and inappropriate space not designed for convenience or ease of function.

8. Women played a leading "backstage" role within the traditional Chinese house

Under the conventions and constraints of cultural duty, a man was not only excluded from the domestic affairs but was disqualified by his lack of skill and competence in dealing with the practical matters of the house. Thus women became, in effect, the only full-time users of the house. Furthermore, to be the mother of a family was a path for a woman to achieve both practical and symbolic authority, and become an exception from the enslavement of the male value system. In some cases, by this means, a women could gain a measure of dominance over a weak father on domestic matters and threaten his position of power and privilege.

Gaining domestic authority was virtually the only way a women could improve her condition in an environment which was in effect a spiritual prison. A women's eagerness to achieve such authority threatened damage to the lineage system. In spite of the fact that the achievement of power by women was seen as threat to the stability of the lineage and whilst women were excluded from almost all formal family advantage, and their extended domestic authority was never formally acknowledged by the lineage, society or laws, the exclusive position of the women within the home allowed her, in fact to exercise a subtle but ultimately potent influence which had both cultural as well as domestic significance.

9. The traditional Chinese house concerned only the father of the family

The spatial order of a house could be confusing, hard to explain and difficult to understood whilst the original spatial meanings could become even more ambiguous after the separation of brothers, even though the building retained its overall form and all the *fang*s still "lived together" on the surface [3]. This suggests that spatial concepts were closely related to domestic human relationship and ethics and that all spatial organisation and meanings could be fully understood only when all family members were set in a steady domestic framework with a single household-head at the centre.

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[3] Some people treated the room at the left-hand side of each side hall as the noblest room in each separated unit, but some others preferred to believe that the nearer to the original main hall, the nobler the room.

That the house definitely concerned only the father could not only be clearly discerned in father's absolute authority and ownership as completely upheld by law, but could also be supported by the architectural perspective that (i) the *feng-shui* principle concerned only the male household-head's *pa-tzu*, (ii) the scale and the form of the house concerned only the father's social status and position, (iii) the spatial order of the house could be understandable only whilst the father was the core of the family, and (iv) neither was there any space or any architectural component of the house which was named after the female, nor was there any connotation of female gender of the etymology for the words of those names. No female family members (nor any subsidiary male family members) could have the right to any direct influence on the architecture of the house. The father-centre, thus, was more significant and more precise in symbolic meaning than the male-centre to the traditional Chinese house.

10. Male anxiety about female chastity and fear of female power were powerful hidden factors concealed by the mask of a male dominated spatial concept of the traditional Chinese house

Male anxiety about female chastity resulted from Chinese double standards relating to sexual morality as understood for men and women, and from the absolute importance which attached to female chastity within the lineage. To "cage" untrustworthy women and to prevent access to all supposed male intruders became the primary consideration in the organisation of domestic space. This over anxiety, adding to men's sub-conscious fear of female power, was mainly expressed by ways of giving closed and limited spatial division, defined by heavy walls, creating gender boundaries and exclusive sexual groups within a spatial structure informed by the demands of inward supervision and domination

The almost completely sealed back-wall against the outside, and the completely open-face to the closed inner courtyard can thus be understood to be primarily the result of this anxiety rather than an architectural attempt to achieve spatial fluency or a better physical environment for the occupants. Both the concrete and abstract separation of sexes and

domestic space meant that gender was definitely one of the most important issue behind the mask of the male value to the traditional Chinese house [4].

11. The answer of "Did female roles influence the traditional Chinese house?" is yes and no

According to the arguments developed in the previous chapters of this thesis, all concepts and practice associated with a house would, superficially at least, be directly concerned only with the male household-head. The viewpoint that "the traditional Chinese house had absolutely nothing to do with women" is still accepted by almost all relevant researchers in Taiwan today. However this issue may be dialectical in logic.

The traditional Chinese house did suggest that its domestic spatial organisation and the symbolical meaning was somehow closely related to the traditional Chinese attitude towards gender and sex. Yet the more precise explanation is that what really directly influenced the house was the stereotypes of the traditional female roles, their cultural functions, and the social restraint imposed by exclusively male values. Therefore, the argument should be rephrased to read "whilst it is true that the traditional Chinese house was only very slightly and very passively influenced by the biological character of women, it was actively and decisively influenced by discriminative viewpoint of male values about the cultural role of women."

8-2 The perspective for further research

Though women in Taiwan in recent decades have not been formally discriminated against by the law or other tangible means, they were not equally treated. The blame for this attaches to most Taiwanese, including women themselves who were still at least partially enmeshed in Chinese

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4 The idea that "the spatial fluency was one of the most important characteristics of the traditional Chinese house" was a popular received viewpoint in most research in Taiwan, but I do not completely agree with this because this idea can not very well explain the triad-courtyard house where had only few small openings for rooms to face their semi-public side courtyard, and the solid and completely surrounded external walls were still adopted to the quartet-courtyard house even they were in the rural district

traditional value and by their own self-expectation encouraged by deeply entrenched traditional notions of female virtue.

On the other hand, an entirely new spatial concept from the Western has been imported into Taiwan, completely replacing the original one, and dominating the development of all modern architecture in Taiwan, after the Pacific War. Whilst this universal and total change impacted upon and confused the Taiwanese in most aspects of life, especially the inner conflict between the traditional values and pattern of modern life, the evidence seems to suggest that it has the least effect upon Taiwanese women who have failed to adapt in a positive way but whose response has been silent and passive.

Whilst there are at last signs are that a new generation of Taiwanese women are actively developing a distinctly personal character as more and more social and domestic roles become available for them to play, it is still apparent that, even today, most of them are suspended between traditional values and the new self-determining Western values. This suggests that the issue of "what and how this contradiction between the inner old values and the outer new life effects Taiwanese women in the house that totally decided by the Western spatial concept" may be a interesting and practical topic for the development of Taiwanese contemporary architecture, and that the arguments advanced in this present thesis merit further research.

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A. 女性

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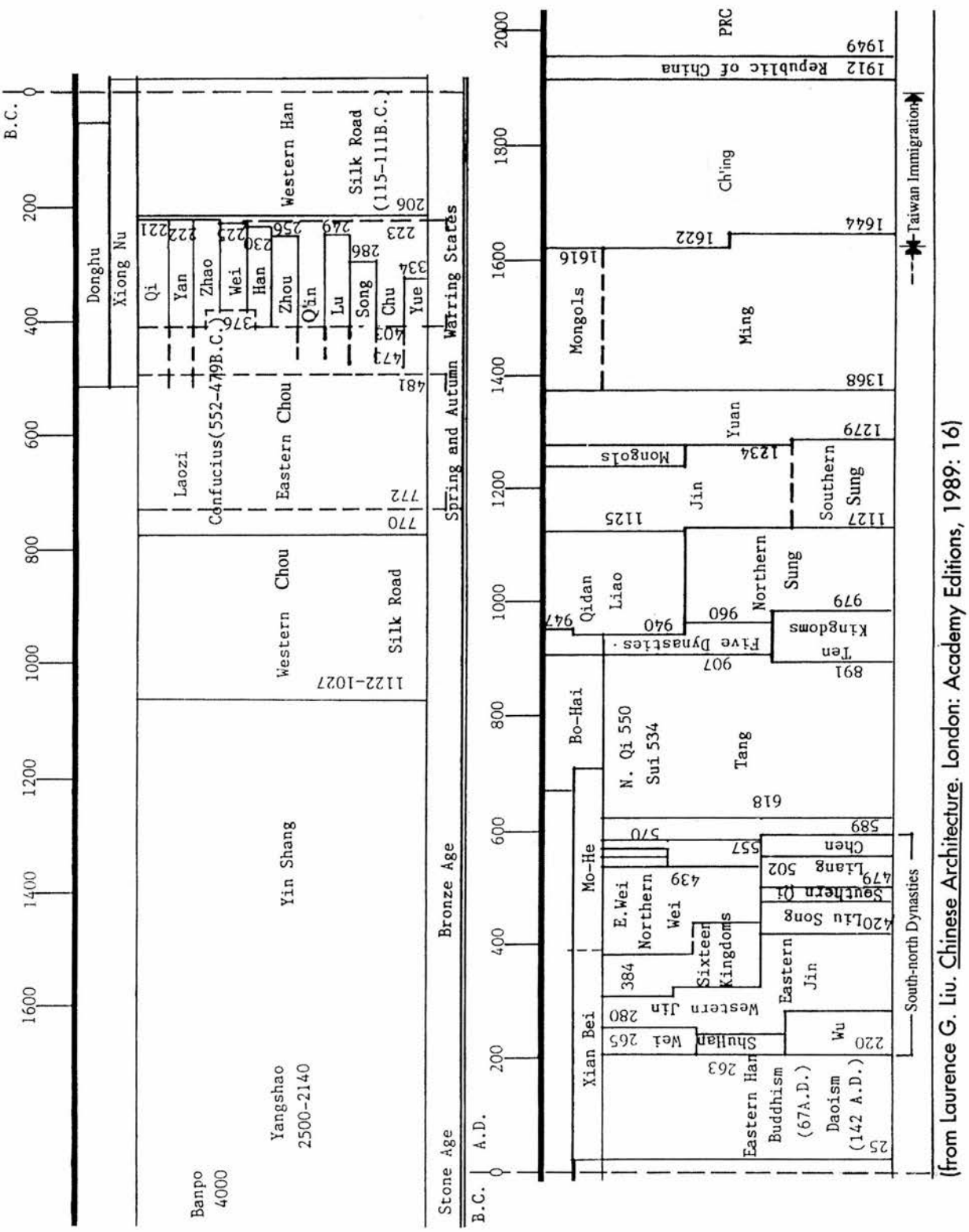
h-58	清代台灣移墾社會獨論	尹章義	台灣史研會論文集	88
h-59	清代台灣移民生活史之研究	唐羽	台灣文獻 (38卷1期) (39卷1期) (39卷2期)	87
h-60	清末台灣的貿易與經濟社會變遷(1860 - 1895)	林滿紅	歷史文化與台灣	88
h-61	台灣住民的歷史命運	陳秋坤	當代(28期)	88.08
h-62	中國傳統價值的穩定與變遷	文崇一	中研院民族所集刊(33期)	72.

Appendix B : Time chart of the Chinese history



(from Laurence G. Liu. Chinese Architecture. London: Academy Editions, 1989: 16)

Appendix C : The map of the thesis

Pre-history (- 1112)
1. Active interaction between sexes (the worship of *kau-mei* and the meeting of mid-spring) (sec. 3-3)
2. The proto model of the courtyard house (sec. 5-1)

|

Chou (1111 - 256)
1. The idea of *yin-yang* (sec. 3-1)
2. Confucianism and the system of ceremonial forms (sec. 3-2)
3. Pre *feng-shui* (the physiognomy of house) (sec. 5-4)
4. The patrilineal lineage and clanship (sec. 4-2)
5. Concubinage coexisted with monogamy (sec. 4-6.3)

|

Q'in (221 - B.C. 206)
1. The arising of *fang-chung-shu* (sec. 3-3)
2. The withdrawal of the right of killing children (sec. 4-2)

|

Han (B.C. 206 - A.D. 220)
1. Two "bibles" of female-education (the Biography of Women and the Admonishment of Women) (sec. 3-2)
2. Confucianism became the only royal school (sec. 3-1)
3. Female virtue formally praised by the emperor (sec. 3-2)
4. The firm discriminative attitude towards women (sec. 3-1)
5. The spatial rules of the courtyard house (sec. 5-1)
6. The prosperity of *feng-shui* (sec. 5-4)

|

Sui (A.D. 581 - 618)
1. The method of calendar in *feng-shui* (sec. 5-3)
2. The food-binding as an appreciation (sec. 2-5.2)

|

Tang (618 - 907)
1. The heyday of *fang-chung-shui* (sec. 3-3)

|

Sung (960 - 1279)
1. The rationalism and absolute female virtue (sec. 3-2)
2. *Fang-chung-shu* disappeared from the public (sec. 3-3)
3. The land-form became the leading *feng-shui* theory (sec. 5-3)
4. Food-binding became a folk custom (sec. 2-5.2)
5. The folk custom of the child daughter-in-law (sec. 2-5.3)

|

Ming (1368 - 1644)

1. The heyday of traditional female-education and the emphasis of female virtue (sec. 3-3)
2. Active underground erotic literature (sec. 3-3)

|

Ch'ing (1644 - 1911)

1. Continuing traditional female-education and erotic literature after Ming and having the developments at the real heyday (sec. 3-3)

|

Taiwan Immigration

1st stage (1661 - 1700)

1. Formal immigration of the Han people (1661) (sec. 2-2)
2. Ch'ing officially ruled Taiwan (1683) (sec. 2-2)
3. The prohibition of immigration started (1683) (sec. 2-2)
4. Ill folk customs encouraged by unbalanced population (sec. 2-4)

2nd stage (1700 - 1800)

1. Economics and public security became bad due to over-populated illegal immigrants (sec. 2-3)
2. Selling women and "drawing a daughter at birth" were adopted and popular (sec. 2-4)

3rd stage (1800 - 1895)

1. The traditional Han society gradually formed (sec. 2-6)
2. Taiwan became the 20th provenience of China (1886) (sec. 2-2)
3. The prohibition of immigration renounced (1874) (sec. 2-2)
4. The population balanced and constantly increased (sec. 2-4)
5. Treaty ports opened to Western world (1860's) (sec. 2-3)
6. The delicate traditional Chinese houses started arising (sec. 2-6)
7. Japanese occupation started (1895) (sec. 2-2)